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BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
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# Assembly Proceedings

## Official Report

# Bengal Legislative Assembly

## Third Session, 1938

18th, 19th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th and 28th March, 1938

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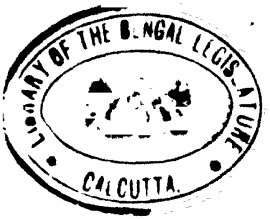


## GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

### GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

**His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Lord Brabourne, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., M.C.**

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(*3*) The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN, K.C.I.E., in charge of the Home Department.

(*4*) The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY, KT., in charge of the Revenue Department.

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(*7*) The Hon'ble Mr. HUSEYAN SHAHEED SUHRAWARDY, in charge of the Department of Commerce and Labour.

(*8*) The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur, in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Departments.

(*9*) The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI, in charge of the Department of Public Health and Local Self-Government.

(*10*) The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT, in charge of the Forests and Excise Department.

(*11*) The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK, in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

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SPEAKER.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.

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SECRETARY.

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Rai N. N. SEN GUPTA Bahadur.

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Khan Sahib QUAZI MUHAMMAD SADRUL OLA.

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K. C. GHOSH, Esq.

# BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS.

### A

**Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.** [Narayanganj East (Muhammadan).]
**Abdul Bari, Maulvi.** [Berhampore (Muhammadan).]
**Abdul Hafeez, Khan Bahadur Syed.** [Dacca Central (Muhammadan).]
**Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.** [Tangail West (Muhammadan).]
**Abdul Hafiz Mia, Mr.** [Kurigram South (Muhammadan).]
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**Abdul Karim, Mr.** [Jamalpur *cum* Muktagacha (Muhammadan).]
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**Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.** [Serajganj North (Muhammadan).]
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**Abdur Rauf, Mr. Shah.** [Rangpur South (Muhammadan).]
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**Abul Hosain, Mr. Ahmed.** [Netrokona North (Muhammadan).]
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Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi. [Goalundo (Muhammadan).]
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Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed. [Noakhali South (Muhammadan).]
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Azizul Haque, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M., C.I.E. [Nadia West (Muhammadan).]

B

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Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath. [Burdwan North-West (General).]
Banerjee, Mr. Sibnath. [Howrah Registered Factories).]
Banerji, Mr. Satya Priya. [Rajshahi (General).]
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Barma, Mr. Puspajit. [Rangpur (General).]
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Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar. [Calcutta East (General).]
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Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath. [Faridpur (General).]
Bose, Mr. Sarat Chandra. [Calcutta South (General).]
Brasher, Mr. F. C. [Calcutta and Suburbs (European).]

## C

Campbell, Sir George, KT. [Calcutta and Suburbs (European).]
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Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath. [Rangpur (General).]
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Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath. [24-Parganas Municipal (General).]
Chippendale, Mr. J. W. (Anglo-Indian.)
Crosfield, Mr. L. M. [Chittagong Division (European).]

## D

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Dutt, Mr. Sukumar. [Hooghly South-West (General.)]
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira. [Calcutta General (Women).]
Dutta Mazumdar, Mr. Niharendu. [Barrackpore Registered Factories).

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## F

Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M. [Jangipur (Muhammadan).]
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum. [Dacca (Muhammadan) Women.]
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Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca University.)
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Gupta, Mr. J. N. [Railway Trade Union (Labour).]
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh. [Darjeeling (General).]

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Himatsingka, Mr. Prabhudayal. [Calcutta West (General).]
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Homan, Mr. F. T. (Bengal Chamber of Commerce.)

## I

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Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H. [Calcutta South (Muhammadan).]

## J

Jalaluddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur. [Cox's Bazar (Muhammadan).]
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Jasimuddin Ahmed, Mr. [24-Parganas South (Muhammadan).]
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi. [Chandpur East (Muhammadan).]

## K

Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Sahib Maulvi. [Netrokona South (Muhammadan).]
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed. [Murshidabad South-West (Muhammadan).]
Kennedy, Mr. I. G. (Indian Jute Mills Association).
Khaitan, Mr. Debi Prosad. (Indian Chamber of Commerce.)
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall. [Midnapore Central (General).]
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra. [Malda (General).]
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath. [Dinajpur (General).]

## M

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Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr. [Bogra North (Muhammadan).]
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi. [Tippera North (Muhammadan).]
Mafizuddin Choudhury, Maulvi. [Balurghat (Muhammadan).]
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Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra. [Faridpur (General).]
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra. [Tippera (General).]
Mandal, Mr. Jogendra Nath. [Bakarganj North-East (General).]
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad. [Midnapore Central (General).]
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Millar, Mr. C. [Calcutta and Suburbs (European).]
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Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh. [Bankura West (General).]
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Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed. [Bagerhat (Muhammadan).]
Mustufa Ali Dewan Sahib, Mr. [Brahmanbaria North (Muhammadan).]

## N

Nandy, the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra, of Kasimbazar. (Presidency Landholders.)
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K. [Brahmanbaria South Muhammadan).]
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra. [24-Parganas South-East (General).]
Nausher Ali, the Hon'ble Maulvi Syed. [Jessore Sadar (Muhammadan).]
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Norton, Mr. H. R. [Calcutta Trades Association.]

## P

Pain, Mr. Barada Prosanna. [Hooghly *cum* Howrah Municipal (General).]
Patton, Mr. W. C. [Darjeeling (European).]
Paul, Sir Hari Sankar, KT. (Bengal National Chamber of Commerce.)
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan. [Malda (General).]

## R

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Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna. [Bankura East (General).]
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Roy, Mr. Kishori Pati. [Jhargram *cum* Ghatal (General).]
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath. [Howrah (General).]
Roy, Rai Bahadur Kshirod Chandra. (Chittagong Landholders.)

## S

Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr. [Bakarganj South (Muhammadan).]
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji. [Rangpur North (Muhammadan).]
Salim, Mr. S. A. [Narayanganj North (Muhammadan).]
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Sen, Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra. [24-Parganas South-East (General).]
Serajul Islam, Mr. [Bongaon (Muhammadan).]
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Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr. M. [Kusthia (Muhammadan).]
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khandkar, Mr. [Gopalganj (Muhammadan).]
Shamsul Huda, Maulana. [Mymensingh (South (Muhammadan).]

Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath. [Rangpur (General).]
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan. [Bankura West (General).]
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda. [Bengal Dooars (Western) Tea Garden Labour.]
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Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. [24-Parganas Municipal (Muhammadan).]
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar. [Noakhali (General).]

## T

Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi. [Faridpur West (Muhammadan).]
Tapuriah, Rai Bahadur Moongtu Lall. (Marwari Association.)
Thakur, Mr. Promatha Ranjan. [Faridpur (General).]
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji. [Bhola South (Muhammadan).]

## W

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Walker, Mr. W. A. M. (Indian Jute Mills Association.)
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C. (Bengal Chamber of Commerce.)

## Y

Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr. [Faridpur East (Muhammadan).]
Yusuf Mirza. [24-Parganas Central (Muhammadan).]

## Z

Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi. [Malda North (Muhammadan).]
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A. [Hooghly *cum* Serampore (Registered Factories) Labour.]

# THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS

**(Official Report of the Third Session.)**

**Volume LII—No. 5.**

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Friday, the 18th March, 1938, at 4 p.m.

### Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 231 members.

### Obituary Reference.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Ladies and gentlemen, it must be a shocking news to you to hear that Mrs. Ellen West, a valued member of this House, breathed her last this morning. She had been ailing for some time, but we did not realize that we would lose her so soon. She was a valued worker among the Anglo-Indian community, and she did her best to help the cause of Anglo-Indian education and Anglo-Indian welfare. I am quite sure that the loss is such that we cannot but feel it deeply. I find that we are in the midst of the Budget session, otherwise I would have considered it necessary to adjourn this House. I am sure it is the wish of this House to express our deepest condolence and sympathy on her death, and I should be thankful if ladies and gentlemen will kindly rise in their seats.

(Pause.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. The Secretary will take the necessary action.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

### (to which oral answers were given)

### Witness shed in the compound of the Bajitpur Munsif's court, Mymensingh.

*243. **Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMED:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department aware that there is no witness shed in the compound of the Bajitpur Munsif's court in the district of Mymensingh?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government are considering the desirability of taking steps in the matter?

**MINISTER in charge of JUDICIAL and LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain, Khan Bahadur):** (*a*) There is no shed.

(*b*) The matter is already under correspondence with the District Judge.

### District record room at Bakarganj.

*244. **Mr. UPENDRANATH EDBAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to state for the years 1936 and 1937—

(*i*) the total amount of money spent in the civil courts of Pirojpur under the head "cost of calling for documents from the district record room at Bakarganj";

(*ii*) how many records were called for; and

(*iii*) how many of those called for have not arrived in time?

(*b*) Is it a fact that records, called for, from the said record room, do not arrive in proper time, very often entailing hardships to the litigant public?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) (*i*) No cost is realised from the parties for calling for records for disposing of a petition or proceeding which cannot under the law be disposed of without such record. But when a party calls for certain papers from the district record room for evidence he has to pay twelve

annas as postage in each case and the total cost for this purpose amounted to Rs. 27 and Rs. 90-8 in 1936 and 1937, respectively.

(*ii*) 1936—590 and 1937—989.

(*iii*) and (*b*) 1936—19 *plus* 8 which were not complied with as the requisitions were defective.

1937—56 *plus* 26 which were not complied with as the requisitions were defective.

**Hostel accommodation for Indian Christians in Government institutions.**

***245. Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state —

(*a*) In which of the following institutions, hostel accommodation is available: —

(1) Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur;

(2) David Hare Training College, Calcutta;

(3) Teachers' Training College, Dacca;

(4) Medical College, Calcutta;

(5) Veterinary College, Belgachia, Calcutta;

(6) Ahsanullah School of Engineering, Dacca;

(7) Bengal Survey School, Mainamati, Tippera;

(8) Government Central Weaving School, Serampore;

(9) Government Silk Weaving and Dyeing School, Berhampore;

(10) Agricultural School, Manipur, Dacca;

(11) Forest School, Kurseong;

(12) Physical Education Centre, Calcutta;

(13) Technical Schools at Pabna, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Krishnagar, Rajshahi and Burdwan;

(14) Campbell Medical School, Calcutta;

(15) Dacca Medical School, Dacca;

(16) Lytton Medical School, Mymensingh;

(17) Ronaldshay Medical School, Burdwan;

(18) Chittagong Medical School, Chittagong; and

(19) Jackson Medical School, Jalpaiguri?

(*b*) The total number of seats in each such hostel available for—

(*i*) Hindus;

(*ii*) Scheduled Castes;

(*iii*) Muslims; and

(*iv*) Indian Christians?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) of the absence of hostel accommodation for Indian Christians in a majority of the said institutions; and

(*ii*) of a feeling of discontent among the members of this community?

(*d*) What steps, if any, do the Government propose taking in order to make hostel accommodation for Indian Christians available in institutions where at present it does not exist?

**MINISTER in charge of EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq:** (*a*) and (*b*) A statement furnishing the particulars as far as available is laid on the Library table.

(*c*) and (*d*) The particulars in the statement do not appear to justify any general complaint. I have not so far received any complaint, but I shall be prepared to examine the question sympathetically if complaint is made as regards individual institutions.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that last year two Indian Christian students could not take their admission in the Survey School at Mainamati on account of want of hostel accommodation there being such overcrowding in both the Hindu and Muslim hostels that no room could be found for them?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I am not aware of it, but I admit the possibility.

## Chairman, Calcutta Improvement Trust.

***246. Khan Bahadur ABIDUR REZA CHOWDHURY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) when was the appointment of the Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust first made; and

(*b*) whether the appointment is reserved for a member of the Indian Civil Service only?

**MINISTER in charge of PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali):** (*a*) The 2nd January 1912.

(*b*) No.

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state on what principle the Chairman is selected?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Since I came into office no question of selection of the Chairman has arisen, and I cannot give the hon'ble member any answer as to the principle on which appointments were made before.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any Muhammadan has ever been appointed Chairman of the Improvement Trust?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think all along Europeans have been appointed.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the question of the early appointment of a Muhammadan as Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, after the retirement of the present incumbent, is under the contemplation of Government?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I do not know if there is any question of retirement of the present incumbent as yet. At least I am not aware of it.

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the present pay of the Chairman?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am sorry, I cannot say that off-hand.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the term of the present incumbent is going to expire?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am not even aware that it is a term appointment.

**Introduction of the system of voting by ballot in the District and Local Boards elections.**

*247. **Maulvi MOSLEM ALI MOLLAH:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that representations from various quarters for the introduction of the system of voting by ballot in the District and Local Boards elections of this Province are being received in his department?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of introducing the system of voting by ballot in the said elections?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The matter is under my consideration.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how long the matter has been under the consideration of Government, and how long it will remain under their consideration?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The matter came under my consideration shortly after I came into office, and I have been making enquiries on two points, viz., administrative difficulties and the question of cost. Personally, I am in favour of the introduction of the ballot system all through. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from Congress benches.)

**Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKER:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government are taking for fixing a percentage as regards the appointment of members of the scheduled castes in the offices of the District Boards?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise in connection with this.

**Qualification for admission in the Medical School.**

*248. **Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that Medical Licentiates of Bengal sent a deputation to His Excellency Sir John Anderson, praying for raising the status of their education by increasing the number of years from 4 to 5 years

of study in the Medical School and by making the I.Sc. standard as the requisite qualification of admission?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, what steps, if any, are being taken in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes, but there was no prayer for making the I.Sc. standard the requisite qualification for admission.

(*b*) The matter is under my consideration.

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when this consideration will mature?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The matter is a somewhat difficult one, and it is not the only matter that has come up for consideration in connection with the prayer mentioned in the question. So, it is very difficult to fix any time-limit with regard to the final disposal of this matter.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** Is it not a fact that if the status of the Medical Licentiates of Bengal is raised by increasing the number of years from 4 to 5, the status of the M.B's will come down considerably and that their medical qualifications will have no meaning?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is a hypothetical question.

### Rivers Dhurung and Halda in Chittagong.

*249. **Maulana MD. ABDUL AZIZ:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state what steps, if any, do the Government propose to take—

(*i*) for the re-excavation of the dead river Dhurung in the police-station of Fatickchari in the district of Chittagong; and

(*ii*) for cutting the bends of the river Halda in the same district?

(*b*) Have the Government referred these to the Divisional Commissioner for opinion?

(*c*) If so, when and with what result?

**MINISTER in charge of COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra Nandy, of Kasimbazar):** (*a*) The proposals are under investigation.

(*b*) No. The investigation is being made by the Chief Engineer.

(*c*) Does not arise.

**Al-Haj Maulana Dr. SANAULLAH:** Did the Chief Engineer of the Department go to Chittagong for making a survey?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I cannot say that off-hand, but the Chief Engineer has, so far as my information goes, undertaken a survey, and it is likely that some officer will go there if he has not gone there already.

**Al-Haj Maulana Dr. SANAULLAH:** Was there any recommendation regarding the cutting of the bends of river Halda made by the Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I want notice.

**Travelling and halting allowances drawn by the Hon'ble Ministers.**

***250. Al-Haj Maulana Dr. SANAULLAH:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Finance Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing, item by item, with corresponding dates for the last ten months from 1st April, 1937, to 31st January, 1938—

(*a*) the amount of travelling allowances;

(*b*) halting allowances drawn by every individual Minister;

(*c*) the purposes of their visits; and

(*d*) places visited by them?

**MINISTER in charge of FINANCE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker):** (*a*) and (*b*) Statements are laid on the Library table.

(*c*) All these visits were undertaken on account of public business.

(*d*) *Vide* the statement referred to in the reply to (*b*) of this question.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state for what administrative purpose the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain went to Sylhet and Shillong?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I want notice, Sir.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** It appears from the statements that the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut went to Delhi, Muttra, Agra, Benares and Lucknow. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state for what purpose he went to those places?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I want notice, Sir.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** It also appears from the statements laid on the Library table that the Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja Habibullah Bahadur, of Dacca, went to Patna, Ajmere, Delhi and Agra. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state for what administrative purpose he went to those places?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I want notice, Sir.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state for what administrative purpose the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali went to Simla and Kalka?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** He went to Simla in connection with a conference in which his department is interested.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

**(answers to which were laid on the table)**

### Ministerial officers and process-servers from Scheduled Castes in Chittagong civil courts.

**56. Mr. JACAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the Chittagong civil courts—

(*i*) the present number of ministerial officers and process-servers from the Scheduled Castes;

(*ii*) the total number of process-servers appointed during 1937; and

(*iii*) the number of those referred to in (*ii*) who are the Scheduled Castes?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of making recruitments from the Scheduled Castes in the future to make their representations adequate to their population strength?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) The minimum percentage of recruitment in Chittagong from Scheduled Castes has not yet been fixed.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of unstarred question No. 56.*

(*a*) (*i*) One clerk and 5 process-servers besides 2 enlisted candidates (including 2 probationer process-servers).

(*ii*) 59.

(*iii*) Of the above, 1 belongs to Scheduled Castes.

**Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR:** With reference to (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government would consider the desirability of fixing the percentage of appointments for the scheduled castes?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** It will take some time to fix the proper percentage.

**Mr. MONMOHAN DAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in how many districts of Bengal the minimum percentage of recruitment from the scheduled castes has been fixed up to date?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Ministerial officers and process-servers from Scheduled Castes in the Noakhali civil courts.**

**57. Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the Noakhali civil courts—

(*i*) the present number of ministerial officers and process-servers from the Scheduled Castes;

(*ii*) the total number of process-servers appointed during 1937; and

(*iii*) the number of those referred to in (*ii*) who are the Scheduled Castes?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of making recruitments from the Scheduled Castes in the future to make up the deficiency in the strength of the Scheduled Castes?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) The minimum percentage of recruitment in Noakhali from Scheduled Castes has not yet been fixed.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of unstarred question No. 57.*

(a) (i) Four clerks and 8 process-servers (including 2 temporary).

(ii) 74 (including 20 probationer process-servers).

(iii) Of the above, 7 belong to Scheduled Castes (including 3 probationer process-servers).

**Ministerial officers and process-servers from Scheduled Castes in the Tippera civil courts.**

**58. Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the Tippera civil courts—

(i) the present number of ministerial officers and process-servers from the Scheduled Castes;

(ii) the total number of process-servers appointed during 1937; and

(iii) the number of those referred to in (ii) who are the Scheduled Castes?

(b) Are the Government considering the desirability of making recruitments from the Scheduled Castes in the future to increase their percentage?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) The minimum percentage of recruitment in Tippera from Scheduled Castes has not yet been fixed.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of unstarred question No. 58.*

(a) (i) Two clerks (including one temporary) and 11 process-servers (including one probationer).

(ii) 139 (including 25 probationer process-servers).

(iii) Of the above, 7 belong to Scheduled Castes (including 1 probationer process-server).

**Civil court staff of Noakhali.**

**59. Mr. SHAH SYED GOLAM SARWAR HOSAINI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to state the proportion of the different communities of the civil court staff of Noakhali including the clerical department before the year 1937 and after the year 1937?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** A statement is laid on the Library table.

**Clerks in the Tippera civil courts.**

**60. Mr. SHAHEDALI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing, grade by grade, the existing number of—

(1) Hindu,

(2) Muhammadan, and

(3) Christian clerks,

in the Tippera civil courts (both temporary and permanent)?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** A statement is laid on the table.

*Statement referred to in the reply to unstarred question No. 60.*

EXISTING NUMBER OF CLERKS IN CIVIL COURTS AT TIPPERA.

| Grade. | Total. | Hindus. | Muhammadans. | Christians. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rs. | | | | |
| 175—10—275 .. | 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 175—5—225 .. | 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 145—5—170 .. | 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 80—4—140 .. | 6 | 4 | 2 | .. |
| 70—4—150 .. | 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 80—2—100 .. | 12 | 10 | 2 | .. |
| 35—80 .. | 137 | 81 | 55 | 1 |
| Temporary (on a fixed pay of Rs. 35) .. | 5 | 4 | 1 | .. |
| Total .. | 164 | 103 | 60 | 1 |

**Muslim lawyers in Crown cases in the districts of 24-Parganas and Howrah.**

**61. Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the districts of the 24-Parganas and Howrah—

(*i*) the amount paid in fees by Government for conducting Crown cases during—

(1) 1935,

(2) 1936, and

(3) 1937; and

(*ii*) how much of these amounts were given to the Muslim lawyers?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of taking steps for the engagement of more Muslim lawyers in the Crown cases?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware

(*i*) that there is no Muslim lawyer in the High Court holding any of the Crown law offices maintained by the Government; and

(*ii*) that two appointments have been decided upon in the High Court?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability of making their recruitments from amongst the Muslim lawyers?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) The matter has engaged my attention. It may be noted however that only 4 per cent. of the total number of pleaders enrolled at Alipore are Muslims; the percentage of fees paid to Muslims in 1935, 1936 and 1937 is between 5 and 7 per cent. At Howrah 2·5 per cent. of the total number enrolled are Muslims. The percentage of fees paid to Muslims is between ·8 and 1·9 per cent. For the province as a whole the percentage of Muhammadan pleaders to the total number enrolled is 9·66.

(*c*) This is so.

(*d*) I am fully aware of the desirability of appointing Muslims to some of these posts.

*Statement referred to in the reply to unstarred question No. 61 showing the amount paid in fees by Government for conducting Crown cases during 1935, 1936 and 1937 tried within the district of 24-Parganas and Howrah.*

| District. | Year. | Total amount paid in fees by Government for conducting Crown cases. | Total amount paid to Muslim lawyers out of the amount in column 2. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Rs. a. p. | Rs. a. p. |
| (1) 24-Parganas .. .. | 1935 | 37,040 0 0 | 3,132 0 0 |
| | 1936 | 62,005 0 0 | 4,852 0 0 |
| | 1937 | 58,620 0 0 | 3,266 0 0 |
| (2) Howrah .. .. | 1935 | 9,902 1 0 | 188 6 0 |
| | 1936 | 21,854 7 0 | 176 0 0 |
| | 1937 | 11,913 11 0 | 128 0 0 |

**Clerks under the District Judge of Faridpur.**

**62. Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the present number of permanent and temporary clerks under the District Judge of Faridpur (including those serving in the subdivisional and *chouki* courts); and the number of them that are—

(1) Mussalmans;

(2) members of the Scheduled Castes;

(3) caste Hindus; and

(4) others?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of raising the percentages of Mussalmans and members of the Scheduled Castes for these employments?

(*c*) If so, to what proportion?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) No.

(*c*) Does not arise.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of unstarred question No. 62.*

| | | Permanent. | Temporary. |
|---|---|---|---|
| (*a*) | .. | 133 | 7 |
| (1) | .. | 45 | 3 |
| (2) | .. | 8 | 1 |
| (3) | .. | 80 | 3 |
| (4) | .. | Nil | Nil |

**Recruitment of Munsifs.**

**63. Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) when the next recruitment of munsifs will be made;

(*b*) what will be the method of recruitment, whether by selection or by open competitive examination;

(*c*) whether there will be any age-limit; and

(*d*) if by examination what, if any, has been decided to be the qualifications of applicants eligible to sit at such examination?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** (*a*) Soon after the rules prescribing the standard of qualifications and method of recruitment are finally approved and published. Due notice will be published in the local gazette for general information.

(*b*) By selection.

(*c*) Yes (not more than 27 years on the 1st January of the year in which the recruitment is made).

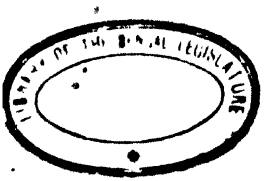
(*d*) Does not arise.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the bar to adopt the system of competitive examination regarding the recruitment of munsifs?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** I am always in favour of selection because selection was the method by which these people were recruited before.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** My question was—what is the bar in adopting the competitive examination system. If you follow the selection system it may so happen that some favourites may be taken in.

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** Selection was the method by which these people were appointed before and we have not changed that method yet.



**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Am I to understand that even after the introduction of the Provincial autonomy the previous system is going on?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government do not think that the system of competitive examination is better than the system of selection that was followed previously?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is a question of opinion.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** I want the opinion of the Hon'ble Minister.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Opinions cannot be asked for in a question.

**Grants-in-aid to the junior madrasahs in Murshidabad.**

**64. Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many junior madrasahs there are in the district of Murshidabad;

(*b*) how many of them get Government grant-in-aid; and

(*c*) the amount of grant-in-aid each of them gets?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** (*a*) 12.

(*b*) 11.

| | Per mensem. |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| (*c*) Muhammadpur | ... 30 |
| Jhunka | ... 50 |
| Shibnagar | ... 25 |
| Manikchak | ... 40 |
| Madanpur | ... 30 |
| Burdhanpur | ... 50 |
| Mahishar | ... 50 |
| Kanduria | ... 30 |
| Bharatpur | ... 25 |
| Shaikhdighi | ... 50 |
| Lalgola | ... 50 |

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why such low sums have been granted as grants-in-aid to some of the junior madrasahs in the district of Murshidabad?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** These sums were settled before I had anything to do with the department. Possibly this was made according to requirements.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government contemplate raising these grants at least to a sum of Rs. 50 in each case?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes: the whole scheme is under consideration.

**Scheduled Caste representative in the Tippera District Board.**

**65. Mr. JACAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that no representative of the Scheduled Castes was nominated to the Tippera District Board?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability of nominating a representative of the Scheduled Castes to the said Board in the future?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The claims of the Scheduled Castes will be duly considered.

**Voting by symbols in the Local and Union Boards elections.**

**66. Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKER:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the desirability of introducing ballot system voting by symbols from the next Local Board and Union Board elections?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The matter is under my consideration.

**Jalpaiguri District Board.**

**67. Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Jalpaiguri District Board has applied for a loan or advance of 2 lakhs of rupees for constructing two bridges over two hill rivers, Ghish and Chel;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that the said rivers and sites of the bridges over them are in an outlying and sparsely populated forest *cum* tea estate corner of the district; and

(*c*) whether it is a fact that the roads, which the bridges over the Chel and the Ghish propose to join, are closed to public motor conveyances and are calculated to benefit only the owners of private motor vehicles?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

**Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** With reference to (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Chalsa Bazar Road which it is proposed to join the bridges over the rivers Chel and Ghish, is closed to taxis and buses?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It has been closed by notification under rules framed under the Motor Vehicles Tax Act.

**River Dwarka in Murshidabad.**

**68. Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the river Dwarka in the district of Murshidabad by overflow cause destruction to the crops and properties every year; and

(*ii*) that the bunds existing have been wiped out by constant inundation?

(*b*) What steps, if any, do Government propose to take to prevent these grievances?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar** (*a*) (*i*) For a long time there were embankments along the river Dwarka

erected and maintained by the *zemindars*. As a result, the river bed and water levels rose, until the *zemindars* could not maintain the embankments which were breached and left unrepaired. The result is that now the area suffers periodically from floods.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*b*) I am advised that it is far better to allow the river to reclaim the low lands by silt deposit The restoration of the *zemindari* embankments will raise the river bed still further so that any breach will cause widespread havoc.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if hundreds and thousands of bighas of crops are destroyed every year by flood in the river Dwarka?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It may be that some harm is done to the crops now but as I have said, I am advised that as the silt is deposited, the land will get higher and higher at every flood and ultimately reach a point when it will not not be submerged and it will then be possible to grow the crops.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if, in view of the expert advice that he has received, he will consider the desirability of advising that all the bunds on the river Dwarka should be cut away and the river water be allowed to pass freely?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I do not think it is possible to do that all at once, because that will mean destruction of crops of a very large area. But, as I have said, we are following the policy of gradual abandonment of these bunds.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that the lands that are flooded by the river Dwarka are very fertile and, therefore, no improvement is required by the silting up of those lands by the flood of the river?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** The advantage which is gained by the deposit of silt was not simply making the land more fertile but also raising the level of the land so that when the proper level is reached it will not be affected by flood.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that the Collector of Murshidabad has received a largely signed petition to the effect that either the bunds be properly maintained or no portion of them be allowed to remain?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I have no knowledge.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government propose to take to save the crops being destroyed every year?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is certainly unfortunate that it is not possible for Government to abandon the bunds on the one hand and save the crops on the other. But as I have already said we are trying to abandon the bunds in a very slow process so that injury to the crops might be reduced to the minimum.

**Mr. SASANKA SHEKHAR SANYAL:** On a point of order, Sir. In answer to question (*b*) as well as to the supplementary question, there is no proper answer given by the Hon'ble Minister. The specific question was "what steps, if any, Government proposed to take." But the answer given is to the effect what should not be done. So my supplementary question is—what is the immediate contemplation of Government to avoid this catastrope on the crops?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** The technical advisers of Government have not been able to think of any device by which it would be possible to abandon the bunds and at the same time protect the crops from the beginning.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that this devastation is increasing due to an anicut constructed by the local villagers a few miles above the Ronga bridge?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I have no knowledge.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the crops can be saved by opening sluice gates on the bunds of the river?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** If that is a feasible proposition and the cost not prohibitive, Government would have no objection to examine it.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** In view of the expert advice received, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of acquainting the local public of these facts so that they may

get ready for this kind of eventuality and not be prepared for bunds and bridges?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I think that is essential.

**Incorrect record of Proceedings—Delay in answering Questions.**

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Dr. Sanyal, you yesterday referred to certain proceedings. I have made enquiries and found that the printer's devil literally had been playing here. What happened was this. When the proceedings went to the Hon'ble Minister, his Secretary or he himself wrote in the side column that something was omitted there and somehow that was incorporated in the proceedings. There was nothing in the nature of an omission which was done either by the reporters or by the press but certain remarks which should not have been there have been printed as a part of the speech.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I know how that portion which was interrupted by me got omitted either by the reporters or by the press?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It could not be reported.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** In that event the matter could have been referred to me and it would have been possible to get it incorporated.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The difficulty is that interjections and interruptions come in at such quick succession that at times it is not possible to record them. Some note to the effect that here some interruptions took place would have been quite in order. Some statement like that ought to be there. I admit that I did not notice it until attention was drawn to the fact that this was put as a part of the speech itself and was printed as such.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** My difficulty has been due to the fact that the Finance Minister's reply to my interruptions have been incorporated while my interruptions have been omitted.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I shall have a correction slip issued to delete that portion and to say that an interruption was made which was inaudible.

There is another matter which was referred to by Dr Sanyal the other day. I might say that so far as this department is concerned it is quite true that a certain number of questions were lying in our

department for a certain period. That was particularly at the time when this department was considering the admissibility of cut motions on the budget or things like that. I think so far as the number of questions is concerned there was never a time when there were not enough questions in the Government departments and I am prepared to quote the figures. Uptil yesterday 299 questions have been answered out of 567, so 268 questions are still pending with the department. So far as our department is concerned, all questions that have been received up to the 7th have been admitted and sent to the departments.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of explanation, Sir. I do not presume to correct the view that has been taken, but I find from my record that the delay was not during the period when the budget cut motions were given notice of. There has been delay throughout. There has been such an enormous delay that it took months before one heard anything about the questions he put.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Quite so. I consider that delay is inevitable in a system where there is no rule for the members to send in questions in a regular order. Sometimes it happens that more than 200 questions are received in a single day and inevitably there is some delay in considering them. At other times they come in singly and slowly. At the same time you must realise under what pressure I have to work and I think the members of the House know what amount of time the clerks have to spend in office on their work; they have to work for long hours. The real point is whether there are questions pending with the Government which could have been answered earlier. I hope the members will realise the difficulties under which the questions have to be treated by the Assembly Department.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** You are perfectly helpless then?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Questions of December have not been answered yet.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am taking steps. I might assure you that from the next session a certain amount of time will be allowed to the Government departments within which the answers to questions should come.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "37—Education—General."

**Babu KSHETRA NATH SINCHA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, after a long time I open my mouth in support of the motion moved by my friend, Mr. Monmohan Das. In this connection I would like to draw the attention of the House to the motion moved by Mr. J. C. Gupta on behalf of Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas of the Congress Group. In speaking on that motion I cannot determine what to do, because I belong to a group which is very diffident in their opinion and their mentality. We do not know what to do with this cut motion, because it is based on a thing which is very vague. In these circumstances, I do not like to say anything about the motion rather I would like to oppose it. But I do not forget how grateful my community is to the Congress Group for their kind treatment towards the backward community. There was a time when we looked round us for help and nobody came forward to help us in our difficulties and at the time of any emergency. A time there was, just two years ago, when you, Sir, as the Education Minister told us that Government could do nothing for those who could not help themselves. Those days are gone and am glad to find that the whole thing has changed. Moslems have come to our rescue, the caste Hindus have come to our help, and on all sides we find that every one is willing to help the people who need help most.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Particularly Mahatma Gandhi.

**Babu KHETRA NATH SINCHA:** Certainly. In this connection I would like to put before the House the condition which my community is passing through. In my community there are at least a crore of people in Bengal. The Namasudras alone number 21 lakhs, but their literacy is 6½ per cent. Rajbanshis, the community to which I belong, number above 18 lakhs but its literacy is not more than 3½ per cent.; next the Poundra Kshatriyas number 10 lakhs, their literacy is just 2 per cent.; the Bagdis number 7 lakhs but their literacy is not more than 1 per cent. This is the condition of the four big communities of the Scheduled Caste people and not to speak of others. About them what are we and the Government doing? We have been pressing the Government again and again but how far have we realised our aim and prospect of getting help from Government? Up to now we have got nothing from Government but promise, that is held out to us that they will come to our rescue and raise us to the dignity of human beings. This cut motion is not one to censure the Government; nothing of the

kind. It is intended to get some gesture from Government as to how far they are willing to help us. To remove illiteracy of a crore of people the 5 lakhs that is asked for means nothing at all, but we want a gesture from Government which will indicate that they are willing to help us, save us from humiliation and raise our standard of civilization. This is what is intended to ensure by this cut motion. If Government are willing to help us, we expect that they will give us a small amount and appoint a special officer to see how that amount is spent. I do not say that we want higher education from Government. The other day the Vice-Chancellor Mr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee told us that he is willing to help us but how far we do not know. We have always been neglected and up till now we have got nothing at all. So we have lost faith in everything; we have lost faith in ourselves. If everybody including the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the biggest son of the biggest father, is willing to help us, if they are honest in their intention, if they are willing to help the dumb, down-trodden millions of Bengal, who need most help, then we should be saved to society and humanity.

This is the condition of our community, Sir. We are always neglected, but we are now awakened by the grace of God and also by the grace of Mahatma Gandhi, by whose grace in place of 10 we are now 30 people here. I admit that Mahatma Gandhi has looked to the Harijans better than any body else and we are not ungrateful to him for this, and we shall remember in our kindly remembrance all that Mahatma Gandhi has done for this degraded people who are being treated as nothing but cats and dogs. This, Sir, is the condition of our people. We want to get our real position in the society and in the civilization. We want to be treated as men and not as a thing or an animal, and to become men. Sir, what are our needs? The Government will look to us, the University will look to us and every people, whether Hindus or Muhammadans or any body else,—they too, must look to us that so many of God's creatures are not to be neglected but treated as human beings. Under these circumstances, we want higher education surely, and secondary education none the less, but what we want most is the primary education. For that we like to concentrate our whole attention. Sir, we are a race of cultivators, we are living in villages, far away from civilization, far away from urban areas, and our people are dying of ignorance and unhealthiness. We want primary education, that is the main thing, on which we ask Government to concentrate its whole attention. It is only primary education that can raise these down-trodden people from the darkness of their village homes and from illiteracy and deaths. Therefore, I put this stress on primary education. I know that Rs. 5 lakhs is nothing for this purpose. When the Government is unable to make a scheme for the whole of the province to give free primary education without

taxation, I know that Rs. 5 lakhs is nothing to bring anything to the people. Still we want that something must be done at this moment and not later than that. Therefore, I say that this is the time that we want to see that Government is really willing to help us in our need. In these circumstances, I do not like to say anything more, but I want to say that the former Government did nothing for us, and everybody looked down upon us and neglected us; and whenever anyone from our community raised his feeble voice, it was not heeded. Sir, this was the condition of former times, but time has changed now, and it is time that Government should realise the situation under which the Scheduled Caste people are placed. Under these circumstances, I wish that Government should not remain in that position but should change its mentality.

**Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** Sir, I wish to say a few words only in support of the cut motion of my friend, Mr. Monmohan Das. Sir, the policy of Government is to safeguard the interests of the minority community, and to uplift those communities which are educationally and politically backward, and with that end in view Government divided the whole Hindu community into two political divisions,—Caste Hindus and Scheduled Castes. Political and educational advancement and backwardness are the basis and criteria of this division, so the policy and duty of this Government would be to uplift the scheduled castes educationally and politically. It is a well-known fact that the scheduled castes of the country form 1/5th of the total population. So, Sir, we are not a negligible factor there, but an important factor of the community. So, it is the duty of Government and of the advanced community also to raise us politically and educationally to the same position as the other advanced communities so that we can co-operate with them. We have been the supporters of Government, so we often boast of this Government that this is a national Government and a tenant Government, but, Sir, how can we, as supporters of Government, give support to this Government until and unless we feel that something practical is done for the tenants of this country by this Government? From the budget estimate it will be seen that the total budget receipt of the province is Rs. 13,13,00,000 and out of this amount Rs. 2,25,55,000 has been given for Police Administration and Rs. 1,46,75,000 is given for Civil Works, and only Rs. 1,42,66,000 is given for Education in general, and out of this Education Budget Rs. 28 lakhs is given for University Education, and Rs. 30 lakhs for secondary education, and something like Rs. 35 lakhs only for primary education. Sir, what is the percentage of people that receive University education? Very few; And the amount given for primary education is quite scanty and is a mere drop in the ocean; Primary education being the crying need of the country. The Hon'ble

the Finance Minister, in his budget speech, said: "We shall courageously impose further taxes if necessary". I am sorry, Sir, that the Finance Minister is not courageous enough to impose taxes for primary education and also impose taxes upon capitalists and landlords, who already amassed enormous wealth at the cost of the poor cultivators. The amount which is estimated for the Police budget will be spent for the remuneration of some high salaried police officers and construction of buildings and residential quarters and for their comforts. The Civil Works Budget also will be spent on or misspent for the same purpose of construction of new buildings. Thus we find how this Government is practically quite indifferent to the interests of rural Bengal and to the people of this country generally. The budget estimate shows that the money estimated under the different heads will all be spent for the welfare and comforts of people living within the municipal areas.

Sir, the poor cultivators are illiterate. The total strength of the scheduled caste population is 1/5th of the population of the Province, and, this Government has given us only Rs. 30,000 for special stipends and scholarships to scheduled caste boys. In consideration of our numerical strength and the illiteracy of our people, this amount is entirely inadequate. With regard to primary education, the Primary Education Act was passed so far back as in 1930. But Government have not introduced primary education on the plea of want of funds. Government are ready to impose taxes on the people in the shape of salt tax, punitive tax and various other taxes without caring for public opinion, but, I fail to understand why in the case of primary education Government should be so gracious enough as to wait for the opinion of the people of the country. If Government think that further taxation is necessary for introducing primary education, Government should not hesitate to tax the landlord and the capitalist but must not tax the poor cultivators who are already heavily taxed. I consider that in consideration of our numerical strength and the vast illiteracy of our people, this demand for Rs. 5 lakhs is not much. And when there is a Special Officer for Muhammadan Education, there is no reason why there should not be a special officer for the education of the scheduled caste people.

With these words, Sir, I support the motion of my friend Mr. Monmohan Das.

**Maulvi ABUL HASHIM:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, belonging to a community which has a philosophy which once captured the imagination of nearly two-thirds of the world now being victim of adverse circumstances, is in Bengal and in India classed among the backward in matters of education, I cannot but feel sympathy for the grievances

ventilated by the cut motion moved by my honourable friend, Mr. Monmohan Das. Although I am not in authority to speak on behalf of any one else besides myself, yet knowing the feelings of my friends here with regard to this matter as I do, I think I shall not be contradicted if I say that not only the Moslems on this side of the House but also the Moslems opposite have the same sympathy as I have for the principle underlying this cut motion. There is no denying the fact that the gentlemen of the scheduled castes deserve the same sympathy and support of Government as the Moslems do. Sir, I believe that this Government which is mainly composed of Moslems and scheduled castes will do nothing that may not be liked by their supporters, but will surely do all that their supporters, the Moslems and the gentlemen of the scheduled castes, may think should be done. Sir, in this connection, I would like to say that we must not entirely depend on Government for our advancement. What Government can do is that they can create an atmosphere where we can use our individual efforts and determination to our advantage. I hope Government will do that, but the real advancement and success lie not in any sympathy and support that may be coming from Government, but in our efforts and determination to improve ourselves. The Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University had the courage to rightly observe yesterday that the Calcutta University did not come here with a beggar's bowl. This is the right attitude; we must by our own efforts and determination try to improve our condition and for that we must depend more on our activity and will-to-do than on Government and on similar other support. The first thing that is necessary is that we must shake off the inferiority complex. Sir, it will not be very difficult for us to take courage and shake off all our intellectual lethargy if we study the causes of our backwardness. History tells us that after the fall of the Mughal Empire in India, the new comers to gain a foot-hold in India needed and got the active co-operation and support of that section of the people of India who are now better circumstanced and are classed among the advanced. Sir, as a result of the British policy of suppression of Muslim aspirations we are now classed among the backward, in spite of the fact that we belong to a religion which makes it obligatory and compulsory for its followers, men and women, to acquire knowledge. Sir, the gentlemen of the scheduled castes are the victims of nearly the same circumstances. They belong to a system of orthodox society which is known as Brahminism. This religious system has been depriving the gentlemen of the scheduled castes for ages of all the privileges that an average civilised man is entitled to enjoy. As a result of these hostile circumstances, they are now the untouchables. We must not feel that we are in any way inferior and we hold that if equal opportunities are offered we can in a very short period come up in line with the advanced section of our people. If it is true to say

that the salvation of Bengal and of India lies in a harmonious development of all the classes inhabiting India it can be said that the resurrection of Bengal and of India lies in the resurrection and salvation of the Moslems and the scheduled castes. In view of this, I believe that not only the Government but every section of this House, will do everything that is needed for the uplift and improvement of the masses of the Moslem and scheduled caste communities.

With these few words, Sir, I accord my support once again to the principle that underlies the cut motion moved by Mr. Monmohan Das.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** The question may now be put, Sir.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I have not yet replied. Why should the question be put now?

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** The matter has been sufficiently discussed Now, the Hon'ble Minister may speak.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I do not think it has been sufficiently discussed. It was only moved yesterday. To-day only one speaker other than two speakers from the scheduled castes has spoken. So what I propose to do is to allow one more speaker and after that there will be prayer interval. After the prayer interval I will call on the Hon'ble the Chief Minister to reply. If he does not rise to reply, then the closure motion may be put.

**Mr. BANKU BEHARI MANDAL:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the cut motion of my friend Mr. Monmohan Das. Unless the Government takes up the cause of this community, this community cannot improve. The Government has totally neglected the cause of this community. Last year, when we approached the Finance Minister when he made a provision of Rs. 5,000 for the education of this community, he promised us that he would make some arrangements next year, because the budget of that year was already done. But we are sorry, Sir, this year he has only made a provision of 30 or 35 thousand rupees and certain sum for Muhammadans and scheduled castes, but I do not know, Sir, what is our share in that amount. Now, Sir, you all know that the members of this community are very poor. They can scarcely make provision for their fooding and clothing. So it is not possible for them to impart education to their children.

Now, Sir, my friend has put this cut motion for only 5 lakhs of rupees for the education of this community and for the appointment

of a Special Officer. With due respect to our Muslim friends we say that the Government has made a provision of 5 lakhs of rupees for the Purdah College for Muslim girls, but what has our Finance Minister done for the primary education of the community who are so poor and uneducated in comparison with other communities. This community cannot be neglected Sir, it comprises one-fourth of the whole population of Bengal. Now, Sir, you cannot uplift a nation, unless it is educated, unless the lower strata of its population are improved educationally and politically. So, our earnest request to the Government is that this amount should be set apart for our community. This sum (5 lakhs) is not at all sufficient for the education of such a large number of population of our community. This community is neglected, and I must say that our Government is responsible for the illiteracy of this community. Government should have made provision for the uplift of this community. As the Government has done for the Muslim community by appointing a Special Officer for their education so we also want that Government should make some provision for us and appoint a Special Officer for our education.

With these few words, Sir, I support the cut motion.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have always been a wholehearted supporter of all reasonable claims of the scheduled castes men, not only because the Muslim masses and the scheduled castes masses stand on the same footing, but also in the interests of nation-building. As far as we see, Sir, our nation, our body politic is not growing on healthy lines. If certain limbs of the body are healthy and growing quite satisfactorily, there are other limbs which are lagging behind, and nothing is being done to feed those lagging limbs, and unless all the different limbs grow in proportion together, we can easily realise, that it is not a healthy nation that is growing.

Now, Sir, this demand of the scheduled castes people to be treated specially is certainly a legitimate demand. They have already been treated separately on the political arena. They have been classed as scheduled castes. Sir, I think these people have submitted to this nomenclature, because at the present time it is to their material advantage, but certainly the ideal should be that within as short a time as possible these scheduled castes people should come up to the same level as the other communities of this Province, so that eventually there may be no necessity at all of treating them separately and under a separate name. If our Government is really earnest in its professions to help the backward communities in matters educational, I think that certain bold steps ought to be taken in this matter. Not only scheduled castes people but also other communities that are backward in education should be treated specially. An allotment of some 30

thousand or 50 thousand rupees annually for these people will not at all suffice. Only yesterday, Sir, the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University drew a very lurid picture of the educational backwardness of the Muslim community. From that it is clear that Government so long has been failing in its duty towards the Muslim community. The Government has been equally failing in its duty towards the scheduled castes people. I therefore think, Sir, that the demand that has been now put forward by the motion of Mr. Monmohan Das is a legitimate demand, and should have the support of the whole House. They have demanded 5 lakhs of rupees. I think, Sir, that a comprehensive scheme should be prepared. It may be that 5 lakhs of rupees may not be sufficient. Similarly the Muslim community also has its own requirements. Some 15 lakhs of rupees may be necessary for them. I think, Sir, Government should lose no time in making a comprehensive scheme and allot as much money as is possible and as may be necessary for giving a filip to the education of these backward communities. I want to draw the attention of the House to one aspect of the problem. In the lower stages of education, the Muslims and the scheduled castes people are probably not very backward, but as we go higher, we see that students belonging to these poor communities fall off and cannot keep pace with those of other advanced communities. Poverty of these communities is the principal reason. There is also another reason why in secondary education they are so very backward. If a survey is made of all the educational institutions of this province, it will be found that in areas inhabited by these poor Muslim and scheduled castes cultivators there are very few institutions, such as Middle English and High Schools, whereas in areas inhabited by the higher-caste people there is a large number of such institutions. Sir, I do not blame the higher castes at all. They have done their duty. They have established schools in their areas or villages for the benefit of their own children. It must also be admitted that these institutions confer great benefits on the poorer people of the country, viz., the scheduled castes and the Muslims who live in those areas, but there are certain areas where there are only these poor cultivators—Muslims and scheduled castes people. In those areas there are no schools whatever, and what is necessary is that these areas should be picked out and schools established there. Nowadays, there is a great desire for the advancement of education, and if Government come forward with help I think the local people will also be enthusiastic enough to establish institutions in such areas I think, Sir, that that is also a direction in which help is indispensably necessary. I do not like to say much more on this simple motion. I again say, Sir, that I have full sympathy with the object of this motion, and I give my wholehearted support to it.

**The House was then adjourned for 10 minutes.**

*After adjournment.*

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Huq, will you speak now?

***The Honble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes, Sir, I should like to speak if there is nobody else who wants to speak on this motion—

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, I submit that the question may now be put, because we are all anxious to take up primary education.

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, the closure has already been moved.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** On a point of order, Sir. Even if you accept the closure motion, the Hon'ble Minister in charge has still a right of reply. A closure motion does not shut out the Minister in charge of the Department from speaking. That I think to be the usual procedure

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes It does

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** We take it that the Hon'ble Chief Minister is not prepared to reply inasmuch as he has not as yet risen to speak. (Laughter)

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** No, no, I am going to speak. Sir, I must begin by offering my sincere thanks to my friends of the scheduled castes for bringing up this matter of Government policy in regard to educational facilities for the scheduled castes for discussion and for giving me an opportunity of making a declaration of the policy of Government regarding the education of the scheduled castes and other backward classes. I am led all the more to make a few remarks on questions of general policy, because I find that some of the speeches that have been delivered here have proceeded from an ignorance of real facts or from a misapprehension of existing conditions.

Sir, I will state in the first place what Government have been able to do regarding the education of the scheduled castes and other backward classes, what they have been doing at the present moment, and what they contemplate doing in future.

Sir, the question before us may be considered from different points of view. The motion that stands in the name of Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas, and which has been moved by Mr. J. C. Gupta, is of a general character regarding the policy of Government, but the motion of Mr. Monmohan Das raises some specific issues. I will, therefore, reply briefly to the motion standing in the name of Mr. Rasik Lal

Biswas, and then make my statement regarding the motion moved by Mr. Monmohan Das.

Now, Sir, with regard to the general policy pursued by Government towards the education of the scheduled castes and other backward classes, we must consider the question under three heads: (*a*) grant-in-aid to schools started by the scheduled castes for their own benefit, (*b*) free and half-free studentships in schools and colleges, and (*c*) special scholarships for students belonging to the scheduled castes. Over and above this, there are expenditures under the head of non-recurring capital expenditure—such as construction of buildings, construction of hostels and repairing of existing institutions. Under the first head, viz., grant-in-aid to schools started or managed by members of the scheduled castes, I must tell this House that up to now Government have spent a sum of Rs. 71,879 for general education of the scheduled castes and backward classes. They have also spent Rs. 9,250 on a grant to the society for the improvement of education among backward classes, Rs. 11,680 on a grant for training facilities of backward and depressed classes, and Rs. 3,312 on a grant to hostels and messes for Namasudra, etc., thus bringing the total expenditure to the figure of Rs. 96,121.

Under the head of scholarships, I have to state to this House that there are 36 primary preliminary scholarships for boys of the value of Rs. 2 each and tenable for two years, which cost Government an annual sum of Rs. 1,728. There are also 66 primary final scholarships for boys of the value of Rs. 3 each and tenable for two years, the cost being Rs. 4,752 a year. Then there are 40 middle scholarships for boys of the value of Rs. 4 each tenable for four years entailing an annual cost of Rs. 7,680. Again, there are six junior scholarships of the value of Rs. 10 each per month tenable for two years in any college, costing Government Rs. 1,440 a year.

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| 6 Senior Scholarships of Rs. 15 for 2 years amounting to ... | 2,160 |
| 1 Graduate scholarship of Rs. 30 for two years amounting to ... | 720 |
| 2 Graduate scholarships of Rs. 30 for one year amounting to ... | 720 |
| 1 Law scholarship of Rs. 10 a month for 2 years amounting to ... | 240 |
| Total ... | 19,440 |

or roughly Rs. 20,000 a year.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** Are all these meant only for scheduled castes?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes.

Then for technical branches we have got—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| 2 scholarships of Rs. 240 per annum amounting to ... | 480 |
| 2 scholarships of Rs. 300 per annum amounting to ... | 600 |
| 3 scholarships of Rs. 10 a month for 2 years amounting to ... | 720 |
| 2 scholarships of Rs. 10 a month for 2 years amounting to ... | 480 |
| 2 scholarships of Rs. 12 a month for 2 years amounting to ... | 576 |
| 2 scholarships of Rs. 7-8 a month for 4 years amounting to ... | 720 |
| Total ... | 3,576 |

or nearly Rs. 4,000 a year.

So under these two heads Government have been spending in scholarships for the scheduled castes a sum of over Rs. 23,000 or nearly Rs. 24,000 a year.

I do not for a moment mean to suggest that this sum is at all adequate, but we have made only a beginning by increasing the number of scholarships amounting to 33,000 for industrial and technical institutions. This is only a beginning and under the head of scholarship we propose to do more as I will tell you later on when I deal with the motion of Mr. Monmohan Das.

As regards the additional provision that has been made in the budget of 1938-39 for the scheduled castes, I may point out that state scholarships have been provided under the High Commissioner for India in England and the ultimate cost to Government on this account would be Rs. 11,162—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Scholarships for members of scheduled castes amount to ... | 29,160 |
| Creation of special stipends for girls of educationally backward classes amount to ... | 4,560 |
| Educational scholarships for member of scheduled castes (Medical) ... | 3,840 |
| Creation of scholarships for backward classes at the Jackson and Chittagong Medical Schools (Medical) ... | 360 |
| Total ... | 49,802 |

or roughly Rs. 50,000 a year.

Then there are the following extra facilities also provided by Government for the students of the scheduled castes.

Free-studentships in Government and aided schools up to 15 per cent. of their own enrolment subject to a minimum of 2.

Additional free-studentships in Government colleges up to 5 per cent. of their own enrolment subject to a minimum of 2.

Reservation of 3 seats in each of the two training colleges at Calcutta and Dacca.

All these special measures are in addition to the ordinary facilities which are equally open to all classes including the children of scheduled castes.

I may mention in this connection that many of the facilities which have been given to the scheduled castes were inaugurated during the regime of the present Hon'ble Speaker of the Assembly when he was the Minister for Education in Bengal. I am only following in his foot-steps and carrying out the policy which he had laid down some time ago.

Then there is one principle which I may mention has been the guiding principle of the Government in dealing with the education of the scheduled castes students. It is this: that in grants-in-aid, in scholarships and in other matters we treat the scheduled caste communities as coming under the same rule which governs the education of the boys of the Muslim community. We make no distinction whatsoever in grant-in-aid rules and capital grant to schools between the students of Muslim community and students of the scheduled castes community.

Now, Sir, my friend, Mr. J. C. Gupta, was reading out to this House the expenditure, provided in some of the other provinces in India, for the education of the students of the scheduled castes. As regards other provinces, I can at once say that on figures we do not compare unfavourably either with Bihar, U. P. or any other Province. It is in Madras only that the figures are higher and the reasons I may point out to this House: in Madras, at any rate, up to only a few months ago, boys belonging to the scheduled castes were not allowed to read in ordinary public schools. The result was that the Government—not the present but the past bureaucratic Government—had to start separate institutions for the students of the scheduled castes and maintain these institutions at public cost. The number of public institutions mainly reserved for scheduled castes students is roughly 9,393 and the strength on the rolls is 364,156 which cost Government nearly Rs. 93,000 or a lakh of rupees. In Bengal, however, the conditions fortunately are different. Students belonging to the scheduled castes can read in public schools and colleges along with the students

belonging to other communities, and there has been no need for starting separate institutions for the boys of the scheduled castes. I therefore contend that if we take into account the amount that is spent for the education of the scheduled castes students in all the educational institutions from the primary stages upward and add to that the special facilities that we are giving to the students of scheduled castes, the total amount will far exceed that of any other province that spends for the education of the scheduled castes students.

Sir, it is not by comparison that I want to justify the policy of Government. I freely admit that not enough has been done. I said last night that if the boys of the Muslim community and the boys of the scheduled castes are backward in education, Government cannot be absolved of blame for not taking up the question in right earnest and solving the problem at whatever cost to the public exchequer. But just as the various communities have awakened to a sense of responsibility, Government have also awakened to their sense of responsibility to the students, particularly of those communities who from various circumstances are unable to help themselves. It is therefore the declared policy of Government to do their utmost for the education of the Muslims and the scheduled castes in order to bring them on a line with the other advanced communities in this country.

Now, Sir, I may mention that in the scheduled castes community itself, there have been public-spirited gentlemen who have given all their lives' earnings and belongings for the cause of education not merely of the scheduled castes, but for the education of scheduled castes and all other communities inhabiting that particular area. I may mention here the name of one gentleman of revered memory who was a personal friend of mine, Bhagai Haldar of Bakarganj in village Agarjari who gave all he had. He begged from door to door, started schools and hostels for all communities and up to the last day of his life he did all he could for the advancement of education in his own area. If a community can produce men like Bhagai Haldar I do not think that the schedule caste people have any cause for despair when they have got in them the same mettle as the boys of other communities. If they are only given special facilities, I have not the slightest doubt they along with the students of the Moslem community will soon come into line with the other advanced communities and the figures which my esteemed friend the Vice-Chancellor read last night may be reversed and instead of 21 per cent. Mussalmans 79 per cent. Hindus we may have 79 per cent. Mussalmans as against 21 per cent. Hindus. The day may come and let us all hope that I may have my revenge on the Vice-Chancellor, the noble revenge, of making my community and the scheduled caste community come into line with the other advanced communities in India.

**Babu KSHETRA NATH SINGHA:** But Bhagai Halder's school has been disaffiliated.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I am just coming to that. I am going to tell the House what I have done. Bhagai Halder's institution can never die. Everything else can pass away but the good work started by Bhagai Halder can never die and long before this motion was tabled I asked the educational authorities of Bakarganj to put up a scheme for making the hostel and the house *pucca* and whatever the cost may be I give this promise publicly in this House that I shall see that all the houses are made *pucca* and a permanent memorial is raised to the memory of Bhagai Halder. (Cries of hear, hear.)

I know that at one time there was an officer who used to be called the Special Officer for Muhammadan Education. That gentleman is still alive and when we were boys we used to look upon him as a very superior being who was an authority on all questions relating to Muslim education. There is no reason why there should not be a Special Officer of the same type to look after and advise Government on questions relating to scheduled caste education. I may tell the House that I have asked the Director of Public Instruction to suggest the name of an officer belonging to the scheduled caste, already in service, who can be put on special duty as a Special Officer. I hope to create another new post, and for that a scheme will have to be made out, submitted to Finance Department and then passed in the Cabinet and through the Public Service Commission and then the appointment is to be made after the salary is voted by the Legislative Assembly. All these will mean delay. I want to take prompt action. I ask the scheduled caste people to name a suitable man and I will appoint him immediately; so you see that I have already taken action regarding the appointment of a Special Officer for the education of the scheduled caste.

I come to the other point of my friend, Mr. Manmohan Das, namely, the necessity of a capital grant of Rs. 5 lakhs for the spread of education for the scheduled castes appointing a Special Officer for the said purpose.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Another twenty-five minutes.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Have we got another speaker to my left? I won't take more than 2 minutes.

My friends of the scheduled castes will remember that some time ago, nearly a fortnight ago, I had a conference and I suggested to them that it would be very useful if we had an Advisory Committee for suggesting schemes with regard to the spread of education amongst the scheduled castes people. What I have decided is to have three

such Advisory Committees, one for Eastern Bengal, one for North Bengal, and another for West Bengal.

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** Nothing for southern Bengal?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The Central and Southern Bengal go up to the sea and I have left it for the opposition. A list has been made out and the list that I have got has been divided into three parts like this and I have added some more names as nominees of Government. My reason for having three divisions is obvious from the fact that the conditions in Western, Northen and Eastern Bengal differ materially from one another. In Northern Bengal I have concentrated most because there the number of scheduled castes people is high. However, I have got three committees to be appointed for advising Government regarding the scheduled caste education. I think the Special Officer who is going to be appointed will bring to the notice of Government the complaints of the scheduled caste people regarding the spread of education amongst their boys.

Now comes the question of funds.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** You are going to have committees of members of this House?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes; scheduled caste members of this House. If any other suggestion is given, I am quite willing to alter it.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** Why not include a specialist along with them?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I have no objection If there is a suggestion that a specialist should be appointed and if that is acceptable to the members of the scheduled caste itself, I shall be guided by the members of the scheduled castes who are here.

Regarding the necessity of a capital grant of Rs. 5 lakhs, I may say at once that I accept the suggestion and I propose to bring up a supplementary demand during the July session. It is not the five lakhs alone. If the Special Officer and the Committees that we are going to appoint suggest that more need be spent, more will be spent and I say this with a full sense of responsibility because I feel that the students of the scheduled castes require as much encouragement as the students of the Muslim community. I know from personal knowledge and personal experience the disabilities and disadvantages of the scheduled caste students. They are exactly in the same position as the students of the Muslim community. After all the provincial revenues do not belong to any particular caste or community.

They belong to all and they must be spent judiciously for the betterment of the condition of all the component units of the population of the province. Therefore I accept the principle of the motion *in toto*. I am going to have a Special Officer; I am going to appoint a Committee and as regards money, I am going to spend not only Rs. 5 lakhs but more if needed. I congratulate my friend Mr. Monmohan Das on having brought this motion and on having done so much for the members of his own community.

**Mr. MONMOHAN DAS:** The Chief Minister has touched my heart as he has taken a very sympathetic attitude——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You can't make another speech.

**Mr. MONMOHAN DAS:** I beg leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

The motion of Mr. Monmohan Das was then, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The motion, standing in the name of Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas, moved by Mr. J. C. Gupta, that the demand for Rs. 1,33,45,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

**Mr. GIASUDDIN AHMED:** I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 1,33,45,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. (Necessity of making primary education free and compulsory without fresh tax upon the agriculturists).

সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমার প্রস্তাব, এই House এ যতগুলি প্রস্তাব পাশ হোয়েছে বা এসেছে তার ভিতর সব চেয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় প্রস্তাব বোলে আমি মনে করি। এবং শুধু আমি কেন, আমার বিশ্বাস, এই House এর সকলেই একথা স্বীকার কোরবেন। আমার প্রস্তাব দ্বারা আমি বোলতে চাই যে—বাংলার কৃষকদের উপর কোন প্রকার শিক্ষা কর না ধোরে বাংলায় বাধ্যতামূলক প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা প্রবর্ত্তণ করা কর্ত্তব্য। আপনারা জানেন যাদের সকলেই দেশের মেরুদণ্ড বোলে থাকেন, সেই যে কৃষক, তাদের অশিক্ষার জন্য, তাদের অশিক্ষার সুযোগ নিয়ে—তাদের উপর যে ভাবে অত্যাচার, নির্য্যাতন ও শোষণ চোলেছে, তার যদি প্রতিকার কোরতে হয় তবে তার একমাত্র উপায়—প্রাথমিকশিক্ষা বাধ্যতামূলক করা অবৈতনিক ভাবে। আমার প্রস্তাবের আর একটা বিশেষত্ব এই যে বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা প্রবর্ত্তন কোরতে যেয়ে সকলের উপরই tax এর ব্যবস্থা কোরেছেন, বিশেষ কোরে কৃষকদের উপর খাজনার টাকা প্রতি সাড়ে তিন পয়সা কোরে tax বসাবার ব্যবস্থা কোরেছেন আমি সেই tax বসানোর প্রতিবাদ করিতেছি। আমি বিশেষ কোরে জানি আজ কাল কৃষকদের যে রকম শোচনীয় আর্থিক অবস্থা তার উপর যদি তাদের উপরে আবার tax এর বোঝা চাপিয়ে দেওয়া হয় তাহলে কখনই এই scheme কার্য্যে পরিণত হতে পারবে না এবং এর দ্বারা এই দাঁড়াবে যে, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা তো দেশে হবেই না, ফলে কৃষকদের ভিটে মাটি উচ্ছন্ন হোয়ে সেগুলি

জমিদারের ঘরে যাবে। এ সম্বন্ধে পূর্ব গভর্ণমেণ্ট অর্থাৎ আমলা তান্ত্রিক গভর্ণমেণ্ট কি কোরেছেন বা কোরেছেন তা বোলতে চাই না, কিন্তু বর্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট যদি পূর্ব গভর্ণমেণ্টের নীতি সমর্থন করেন তাহলে আমার বোলতে একটুও দ্বিধা নাই যে—তারাও আমলা তান্ত্রিক mentality নিয়েই এই scheme চালাতে চান। বাংলার কৃষকদের অবস্থা আজ কি শোচনীয়, তাদের রোগে ঔষধ নাই, পরণে কাপড় নাই, পেটেও ভাত নাই; এই হলো বাংলার কৃষকের অবস্থা। এই চৈত্র মাসে গভর্ণমেণ্টের পক্ষ থেকে যদি কেউ enquiry কোরতে গিয়ে বাংলার গ্রামের লোকের অবস্থা দেখে আসেন তাহলে দেখতে পাবেন যে শত করা ৯০ জন কৃষকের ঘরে খাবার নাই। তাদের স্ত্রীলোকের পরণে কাপড় নাই। এই হলো বাংলার যারা প্রকৃত জনসাধারণ, তাদের অবস্থা। এখন, বাংলাদেশে প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা কাদের জন্য প্রয়োজন? বাংলাদেশে প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা সব চেয়ে প্রয়োজন তাদের যারা হলো দেশের মেরুদণ্ড এবং যারা দেশের অগণিত, কোটি কোটি মানুষ। তাদের যখন এই দুরবস্থা তখন তাদের উপর ট্যাক্স আরো বেশী চাপালে তারা কেমন কোরে সেটা দিতে পারবেন তা আপনারাই বুঝতে পারেন। এই প্রস্তাবে আমরা গভর্ণমেণ্টের জন্য এই সুযোগ রেখেছি যে গভর্ণমেণ্ট ইচ্ছা কোরলে যারা বড়লোক তাদের উপর tax বসাতে পারেন অর্থাৎ আমার প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ করলে জমিদার এবং বড়লোকেদের উপর tax বসাতে পারবেন। এর দ্বারা কোনরকম অন্যায় ব্যবস্থা করা হবে না, কারণ কৃষকরা যে ধন উৎপাদন করে, তাই শোষণ কোরে বড়লোকেরা তিন তালা চার তালা দালান কোরছে, মোটর গাড়ী কিনছে। তাদের উপর যদি tax বসান হয় তাহলে তাদের ৪ তলার স্থানে তিন তলা হবে তাদের ১০টা মোটরের স্থানে ৯টা মোটর হবে। কিন্তু কৃষকদের উপর যদি tax বসান হয় তাহলে তাদের ভিটে মাটি চলে যাবে। এই হলো অবস্থা। আমি আর একটা কথা বোলতে চাই, কৃষক প্রজার প্রতিনিধি হোয়ে যাঁরা এসেছেন, তাঁরা, এবং আমি বিশ্বাস করি, যাঁরা কৃষক প্রজার পক্ষ থেকে আসেন নাই তাঁরাও, সকলেই নির্বাচনের পূর্বে প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছিলেন যে আমরা যদি আইন সভায় Assembly তে যেতে পারি—তাহলে আপনাদের জন্য প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অবৈতনিক ও বাধ্যতামূলক করবার ব্যবস্থা করবো। আমরা যখন কৃষক প্রজা সমিতির পক্ষ হইতে দাঁড়িয়েছিলাম তখন আমরা যে প্রতিজ্ঞাপত্র স্বাক্ষর কোরেছিলাম, অনেক কথাই তার মধ্যে আছে, কিন্তু এ কথাটাও আছে যে কৃষকদের উপর বিনা করে প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা বাধ্যতামূলক ও অবৈতনিক যাতে হয় তার চেষ্টা কোরব, এই প্রতিজ্ঞাপত্র বর্তমান মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলীর মধ্যেও কয়জন আছেন যারা স্বাক্ষর করেছিলেন ইহা অস্বীকার কোরতে পারবেন না। এই প্রতিশ্রুতি যদি তাঁরা দিয়ে থাকেন তাহলে সে প্রতিশ্রুতি রক্ষা করা তাদের উচিত।

এই সঙ্গে আমি তাদের স্মরণ করিয়ে দিতে চাই, প্রত্যেক স্বাধীন দেশের এবং যে সকল দেশে স্বায়ত্ব শাসন প্রচলিত আছে সেই সব দেশের শিক্ষার হার। তাদের মধ্যে কোন দেশের মধ্যে শতকরা ৯৭ জন, কোন দেশে শতকরা ৯৫ জন, কোন দেশে বা ৯৩ জন কোরে লোক শিক্ষিত; এর কারণ কি? যখনই যে দেশ স্বায়ত্ব শাসন পেয়েছে তখনই সে দেশের লোক মনে করেছে যে তাদের প্রথম ও প্রধান কাজ হচ্ছে দেশের লোককে শিক্ষিত করা।

সেইজন্য এতগুলি কোরে লোক সেসব দেশে শিক্ষিত হতে পেরেছে। আমাদের ইংরেজ প্রভুদের অনুগ্রহে আমাদের উপর দুশো সোয়া দুশো বছরের শাসনে আমাদের শতকরা শিক্ষার হার পারা ভারতে সাড়ে ছয়। বাংলা দেশে শতকরা শিক্ষিতের সংখ্যা ৯ জনই তার মধ্যে থেকে যদি আবার

মুসলমানের মধ্যে শিক্ষার হার ধরা যায় তাহলে শতকরা তিনজনে গিয়ে দাঁড়ায়। কৃষকদের মধ্যে যদি শতকরা হিসাবে শিক্ষিতের গণনা করা হয় তবে ১ জন কি ১॥ জনের অধিক হবে না। অথচ এই বাংলা দেশের অধিবাসীদের অধিকাংশই কৃষক এবং এই House এর সভ্যদের ভিতর কৃষক সম্বন্ধে বড় বড় বুলি আওড়ানেরও অভাব নাই। আমাদের মন্ত্রী মহোদয়দের থেকে আরম্ভ কোরে অনেকেই বলেন—"কৃষকের মঙ্গলের জন্য আমাদের প্রাণ গলে যায়।" তাঁদের কথার ভিতর যদি কিছুমাত্র সত্যতা থাকে, যদি কিছুমাত্র আন্তরিকতা থাকে তাহলে আমি তাঁদের কাছে জোর কোরে বলতে পারি যে বাংলার কৃষকদের উন্নতির একমাত্র অন্তরায় অশিক্ষা এবং এই অশিক্ষা দূর কোরতে হলে যাতে বিনাকরে অবৈতনিকভাবে বাধ্যতামূলক প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা প্রবর্ত্তন করা যায় তার জন্য অবিলম্বে চেষ্টা করা উচিত। কিন্তু যখনি এসম্বন্ধে প্রস্তাব আনা হয় তখনি মন্ত্রীদের পক্ষ থেকে বলা হয় যে তাঁদের তহবিলে টাকা নাই। তহবিলে টাকা নাই—একথার কোনো অর্থ হয় না। বাংলা দেশে Agriculture বিভাগ থেকে আরম্ভ কোরে যদি সকল বিভাগের জন্যই প্রচুর টাকা আসতে পারে, পুলিশ বিভাগের জন্য যদি কোটি কোটি টাকা অনায়াসেই মিলতে পারে তাহলে বাংলা দেশের পক্ষে যেটা সব চেয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় তার জন্য কেন টাকা পাওয়া যাবে না সেটা আমি বুঝতে পারি না। প্রতিনিধিরা যদি সকলে মিলে চাপ দেন তাহলে মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলিকে বাংলা দেশে অতি সত্বর প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অবৈতনিক এবং বাধ্যতামূলক কোরতে হবে, অন্যথায়, মন্ত্রীত্বের গদি ছেড়ে দিতে হবে, এছাড়া কোন গত্যন্তর নাই। অতএব আমি আপনাদের কাছে অনুরোধ কোরছি আপনারা নির্ব্বাচকমণ্ডলীর কাছে যে প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছেন, সেই প্রতিশ্রুতি স্মরণ কোরে আমার এই প্রস্তাবের পক্ষে ভোট দিন।

এই প্রস্তাবটা কোন ব্যক্তি বিশেষ, দল বিশেষ বা সম্প্রদায় বিশেষের প্রস্তাব নয়, এটা বাংলা দেশের প্রকৃত জনসাধারণের প্রস্তাব। যেমন ইতিপূর্ব্বে যে প্রস্তাব মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলী গ্রহণ করেছেন এবং যারপ্রতি আমরা সহানুভূতি দেখিয়েছি সে প্রস্তাবটা ছিল তপশীলভুক্ত সম্প্রদায়ের বা দলবিশেষের প্রস্তাব। কিন্তু আমার এই প্রস্তাবের ভিতর—তপশীলভুক্ত সম্প্রদায় হোক যে কোন সম্প্রদায় হোক বাংলা দেশের কোন লোকের স্বার্থই বাদ পড়বে না। এই প্রস্তাব পাশ হলে বাংলার সমস্ত সম্প্রদায় প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা বিনা করে লাভ কোরতে পারবে। কাজেই আমার প্রস্তাব সবচেয়ে বড় প্রয়োজনীয় প্রস্তাব অর্থাৎ এর মতন প্রয়োজনীয় প্রস্তাব এই House এ আর আসে নাই। সেদিন কাবুলের কি দেখলাম! কাবুল যখন স্বাধীন হলো—তখনি মহামান্য আমানুল্লা সাহেব সর্ব্বপ্রথম শিক্ষা প্রবর্ত্তন কোরে অশিক্ষাকে দেশ হতে দূর করেন এবং সেইটা কোরতে পেরেছিলেন বোলেই কাবুল আজ সারা পৃথিবীর ভিতর স্বাধীন দেশ বোলে নিজেকে ঘোষণা কোরতে পেরেছে। আজ হয়তো আমরা স্বাধীনতা পাই নাই, কিন্তু দুদিন পরেও যে আমরা স্বাধীনতা পাবো না—একথার কোন অর্থ নাই। আমরা দিনের পর দিন স্বাধীনতার পথে চোলেছি। কাজেই এই প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা বাংলা দেশে অতি সত্বর আরম্ভ হওয়া প্রয়োজন। আমি আর সময় নিতে চাই না। আমি শুধু আপনাদের এই কথা স্মরণ করিয়ে দিতে চাই যে, যদি আপনারা কৃষকদের বাস্তবিক মঙ্গল কোরতে চান, কৃষকদের প্রতিনিধি হিসাবে আপনাদের যদি কোন কর্ত্তব্য থাকে, কৃষকদের শোষণ যদি আপনারা নিবারণ করতে চান তাহলে একবাক্যে আপনাদের সকলেরই এই প্রস্তাব পাশ করে দেওয়া উচিত। এই প্রস্তাব যদি আপনারা পাশ কোরতে পারেন তাহলে মন্ত্রী মহোদয়রা অতি স্বচ্ছন্দে মন্ত্রীত্বের কাজ করতে পারবেন, আর সঙ্গে সঙ্গে কৃষকদের

উপর হতেও যত রকমের অত্যাচার, জমিদারের অত্যাচার, মহাজনের অত্যাচার, উকিল মোক্তারের অত্যাচার সব চলে যাবে। আপনারা জানেন অন্য সকলেই কৃষকদের ফাঁকি দিয়ে লুটে কোরছে। মৌলানা মৌলবী হতে আরম্ভ কোরে জমিদার, মহাজন, উকিল, মোক্তার, ডাক্তার—সকলেই কৃষকদের শোষণ কোরছে। কাজেই আমি বোলছি—আপনারা সর্বপ্রথমে এই কাজটা করুন। কোন কোন মাননীয় সভ্যের প্রশ্নের উত্তরে মাননীয় শিক্ষামন্ত্রী মহোদয় বোলেছেন যে জনসাধারণের উপর শিক্ষাকর তাদের মত নিয়েই বসান হচ্ছে। আমি উহার প্রতিবাদ করিতেছি। জনসাধারণ হিসাবে দুচারজন স্বার্থান্বেষী লোক শিক্ষাকর চাইতে পারে। কিন্তু জনসাধারণ উহা কখনও চায় না। সারা বাংলার অবস্থা না জানলেও আমাদের ময়মনসিংহে যেখানে শিক্ষাকর প্রবর্তিত হয়েছে সেখানে কেউ শিক্ষাকর চায় না। এ সম্বন্ধে আমি challange কোরে বলিতে পারি সেখানে জনসাধারণের পক্ষ থেকে public meeting কোরে সেই meeting এ সকলে শিক্ষাকর চায় ইহা যদি প্রমাণ করতে পারেন কেহ—তাহলে আমি মাথা নত করবো। ( hear, hear ) শিক্ষাকর চাইবে কেমন কোরে; কর দেবার মতন অবস্থা তাদের নাই। যদি আপনারা কৃষকের জমি জমা সম্বন্ধে অনুসন্ধান নিয়ে দেখেন, তাহলে দেখতে পাবেন যত জমি কৃষকদের নিলামে উঠছে—তার অধিকাংশ জমি বাকি করের জন্য নিলাম হয়েছে। যারা খাজনাই দিতে পারে না তার উপর টাকায় সাড়ে তিন পয়সা কোরে কর বৃদ্ধি হলে তারা আর কিছুই দিতে পারবে না এবং তার ফলে তাদের জমি জমা সব নীলাম হোয়ে যাবে।

(Mr. Speaker at this stage vacated the Chair and Mr. Deputy Speaker occupied it.)

**Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD:** Sir, before I entered into the subject matter under discussion, I must make it clear that my intention is not only to oppose the motion of my friend Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed but to offer some suggestions with regard to the policy of Government in the matter of primary education. Sir, the very word taxation raises prejudice in one's mind, and the illiterate mass shudders at the very idea of taxation. We, the self-constituted leaders, are anxious to capture the imagination of the people and the exploiters are loath to open the eye of the exploited, and the Government find it very convenient to defer the advancement of education for the masses like all other unremunerative schemes. The education cess is primarily opposed by the landlords directly, and by some people at their instance indirectly, and lastly by a section of the people who profess themselves to be the sole guardians of the tenants. It is a patent fact that the landlords do not feel the necessity for mass education as they have sufficient means to educate their children in towns and in costly institutions. But, Sir, are they not morally bound to ameliorate the condition of their tenants in all aspects of their life—moral, economical, social and educational? It is a pity that Bengal landlords who have been made the guardians of the teeming millions by a stroke of pen of the Parliament so far back as in 1793 have lamentably failed to discharge their duties and obligations that were

incorporated in that Magna Carta. People of the state were not handed over to the landlords without any conditions whatsoever like so many chattels but reciprocal rights and obligations were created by that valuable document upon which stands the vanity of the Permanent Settlement. Over and above that, Sir, the landlords' portion of the education cess is nothing in comparison to the culpable defaults they have made during the last one century and a half. To those of my friends who profess themselves to be the sole guardians of the tenants, my request will be not to allow the patient to die on the question of settling the doctor's fee. The Congress ministries which claim to have advanced ideas and programmes have not yet been able to introduce free and compulsory primary education in any of the seven provinces without taxation. So, my suggestion is to proceed with the scheme underlying the existing Primary Education Act until a better scheme is evolved. Lest I may be misunderstood I must make it clear that I am opposed to any taxation whatsoever upon the already overtaxed people, but, Sir, I make no secret in saying that I wish to have primary education forthwith and without delay under any circumstances and at all costs. It is better to have an amount ear-marked for this purpose than to depend upon surplus of other resources, and what is this cess after all. The average tax of the Bengal tenant varies from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 a year, and as such the cess that is to be imposed upon him will vary from 8 annas to one rupee or so, and in return the tenant will get the education of their children up to the primary standard without any cost whatsoever. May I ask, Sir, is it at all unacceptable to the tenants and uneconomic for them. I leave this question to the dispassionate consideration of the members of this House.

Sir, the universal cry for primary education has not been enough for the Government to take up the matter with that zeal and earnestness that it deserves. The Bengal Rural Primary Education Act was passed so far back as the year 1930, and that may be said to be the first official recognition of the popular demand for primary education. In spite of the fact that the Act was wanting in one of its most important demands, viz., making it compulsory, it was hailed by one and all not because it satisfied the people's demand, but because it was the first step towards this direction by the Government. Everyone in this House knows how the operation of the Act was shelved for the last seven years on the plea of economic depression. It is all very good to hear. I would have admired the Government for the sympathy and consideration for ill-fed and half-clad masses, but what then we find to our surprise. A number of taxation measures were mercilessly adopted during the period and taxes were collected conveniently forgetting the monstrous economic depression hanging over the ricketty shoulders of the Bengal peasants. Even under the present popular ministry, Sir, some old temporary measures of taxation are

going to be made permanent, and this very fact proves that the present Government also is not altogether opposed to fresh taxation. If that be so, I do not see any reason nor any justification on the part of the Government to raise the plea of economic depression and opposition to education cess when it is admitted almost universally that primary education cannot be introduced without any taxation whatsoever. If the Government can ignore the opposition of the people in other measures of taxation, I do not see any reason why the Government should raise such a plea in the case of education cess at all.

Sir, having realized the crying needs for primary education, and having admitted that it cannot be introduced without taxation, I do not see any reason why the Government should wait for voluntary application for imposing education cess in the districts of the province. This faltering attitude of the Government in this respect is viewed with suspicion that they are not at all earnest to introduce primary education in the Province. If they do so they must pluck up courage in both hands and push this scheme boldly and fearlessly. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister made a statement that free primary education with its compulsory part will be introduced in Bengal, in the course of five years, and I heartily congratulate him for the statement. The ray of hope that was raised by the statement must be made to be felt as mid-day sunshine by the declaration of a definite and exhaustive policy on the floor of this House. Nothing less than that will satisfy the long cherished desire of the people and the demand of this House.

Coming to the actual figures I cannot but characterize the provision of 5 lakhs of rupees for primary education as grossly inadequate and incompatible with the statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. The additional grant of 5 lakhs will not be enough for my district of Mymensingh alone. Government must have realized that the amount available by taxation will only be a fraction of the entire cost necessary for the purpose. Let us take a concrete example. In my district, Sir, education cess will only fetch 9 lakhs of Rupees, which amount will not be sufficient for starting schools that will be necessary for the introduction of free primary education, not to speak of compulsory education, which will require at least double the number of schools that will be necessary under the voluntary scheme. We have already started 1,700 schools, and we expect to start 900 schools more within a month or so. But I fear, Sir, that it will not be possible owing to the scanty resources at our disposal unless the Government come to our rescue in this matter.

(The member having reached the time limit resumed his seat.)

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, I beg to support the motion moved by my friend Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed. I cannot understand——

**Mr. SHAH ABDUR RAUF:** On a point of order, Sir. May I know why Dr. Sanyal stood up to speak without having the permission of the Chair to do so?

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Aftab Ali.

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** Sir, we represent labour in this House, but unfortunately——

**Maulvi ABDUL WAHAB KHAN:** Sir, it is prayer time now.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The House stands adjourned for 15 minutes for prayer.

At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.

(*After adjournment.*)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I find that there is a very large number of speakers who are anxious to speak on Primary Education. I do not want to curtail the debate. If necessary, I propose to close this debate at 7-15 p.m., instead of at 7 p.m. I propose to give five minutes' time to each speaker, so that some more members may have a chance to speak on this subject.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, will you give me ten minutes' time?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is very difficult for me to oblige you.

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** Sir, I was in possession of the House before adjournment.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** No. I was in possession of the House.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am in possession of the House. (Laughter).

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rose just to support the cut motion moved by my esteemed friend Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed. I was surprised, Sir, to find that on a vital question like this there could be any difference of opinion at all. I hope my friends on the opposite will not take this as a political clap-trap but will devote their attention to an important problem like this on its merits. I had during the last year's budget debates drawn attention

to the fact that, if we exercised a certain amount of judgment, Primary Education could really be imparted with very much less expenditure than is now contemplated. At that moment I had not had the time to go into the details, and the Hon'ble Education Minister asked me to hand over to him a note framed along those lines. I have to-day handed over to him a note prepared by me 9 years ago, when, in connection with a certain proposal of extending Primary Education in the district of Murshidabad, I asked that District Board to undertake the task with the minimum possible expenditure. Since then, lots of things have been written and said. We have had before us for the last few months a very valuable document—I mean the report drawn up by eminent educationists under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. The Chairman of that Committee was no less a person than Dr. Zakir Husain, and on that committee there was also a Professor of the Aligarh University, viz., Khwaja Saiyiduin. That Committee reported that Primary Education could be imparted in an inexpensive way in the rural areas if the vehicle of education instead of being what it is now with regard to the three R's, is changed, and education as carried on through certain selected crafts The essence of that scheme, Sir, that education, if sound in its principles, should be imparted through some craft or productive work, which would provide the nucleus of all the other instruction provided in the school. This craft, if taught efficiently and thoroughly, should enable the school to pay largely towards the cost of its teaching staff It is thereupon said in the Report that this self-supporting aspect of the scheme was actually examined with respect to the craft of handloom industry and it was calculated that if the State undertook to take the products done by the schools, the schools could be very substantially made self-supporting. That is one aspect of the question which needs careful examination.

I want to examine this question from another angle of vision. I found from my experience that in the rural areas there is a lot of wastage which takes place both with regard to the amount of money spent actually on the administration of the schools as well as on inspection. If we could enlist non-official co-operation in spreading primary education and if we could get students of colleges to go round the villages and start primary schools and deliver courses of lectures on various things on some well-planned scheme of adult education, and if at the same time we could get hold of High School teachers to help in the matter of inspection, then, I believe, we could save a good deal of money that is now spent on inspection, and could spend the same profitably on the institutions themselves. I had actually made an experiment along these lines in the district of Murshidabad for a number of months. But after some time it was felt that the Department of Education could not allow further increase in the number of schools because their inspection staff was not

properly equipped to cope with the increased number of schools in the area. Since then nine long years have elapsed and Government's outlook has considerably changed. Under the new circumstances, with increased non-official co-operation, it is possible to give primary education to the villagers at much lower cost than what is ordinarily estimated.

I find, Sir, that there is a good deal of heat generated over the motion of my honourable friend simply because he has asked that primary education should be made compulsory without further taxation on agriculturists. There cannot be any proposition more honest and straightforward than this. The agriculturists of Bengal, are, as we have several times demonstrated, already overburdened. They cannot even pay their normal demands for existence. Agriculture has ceased to be remunerative. On the top of that, they have to bear the extra demands by way of rents and various other demands of mahajans and cesses of other institutions like the union board, district board, etc. If you ask them to bear any further burden for education, this will be almost asking them to choose between education on the one hand and taxation on the other, and if you go to the rural areas and ask them whether they like education with taxation or education without taxation they would undoubtedly say that they do not want education if taxation is inevitable——

(At this stage the member having reached the time limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I propose to allow 5 minutes to each speaker as I am trying to accommodate as many speakers as possible.

**Maulana MUHAMMAD ABDUL AZIZ:**

Primary শিক্ষা সম্বন্ধে আমি যতটুকু বুঝেছি, তাতে এবিষয়ে কারো কোন মতভেদ থাকতে পারে না। সকলেই primary শিক্ষা চান। এখন এই primary শিক্ষা, tax নিয়ে হবে, না without tax এ হবে, এই হলো কথা। আমি tax দেওয়ার একেবারেই পক্ষপাতী নই। গতবারে যখন tax দেবার কথা উঠেছিলো, আমি দস্তখত দেই নাই, এবং Minister মহোদয়কে বলেছিলাম যে tax দেওয়ার পক্ষপাতী আমি নই। কিন্তু অনেক দেখেশুনে আমার সেই মনোভাবের পরিবর্তন হয়েছে। আমার constituency র মধ্যে অনেকেই বোলেছে— tax দিলে যদি ছেলেরা এখনি পোড়তে পারে, এবং tax না দিলে সে সুযোগ না হয়, এবং without tax এ পড়ার বন্দোবস্ত হ'তে হ'তে ছেলেরা ছেলের বাপ হইয়া যায়, তাহলে আমরা tax দিয়েই ছেলেদের লেখা পড়া শেখাবো—মিছে আর দেরি করবো না। আমার বিশ্বাস tax যদি এখন আমরা না দেই তাহলে এখন যারা ছেলে আছে—তারা তখন ছেলের বাপ হ'য়ে পড়বে—অতএব আমাদের tax দেওয়াই ভালো। মাননীয় মন্ত্রীমহোদয় বলেছেন "যদিও আমরা tax এখন ধোরছি পরে আমরা সেটা মকুব করতে পারিব। কাজেই এই tax এখন স্বীকার করে' নেওয়াই উচিত।" এবং স্বীকার করে' নিয়ে primary education চালিয়ে

দেওয়া আমি ভাল মনে করি। আমি এই বিষয়টার সঙ্গে আর একটা কথা বোলছি। Primary শিক্ষা সম্বন্ধে যে আর একটী বিধি চলে এসেছে আমাদের দেশের মধ্যে যা অজ্ঞাতভাবে আছে সরকার সে সম্বন্ধে কোন খবর রাখেন না—আমি সেই আরবি মক্তব সম্বন্ধে বোলছি। জায়গায় জায়গায় তাদের দ্বারা কিছু কিছু যে শিক্ষা হচ্ছে, তাতে গভর্ণমেণ্ট একটা পয়সাও দেন না। অনেক মোল্লা মোলবীসাহেবেরা যেসব মক্তব মাদ্রাসা কোরেছেন সেখানে বেশ শিক্ষা দেওয়া হচ্ছে। সেখানে মুসলমানের ধর্ম্মশিক্ষাও হয়—আর যারা দুনিয়াদারী শিক্ষা চায় তাহারা বাংলাও পড়ে থাকে। আমি আশা করি গভর্ণমেণ্ট তাহাদের সাহায্য করবেন। সময় খুব কম, আমি শেষ বোলতে চাই, old scheme madrasa গুলি অতি neglected হয়ে রয়েছে। তাদেরও গভর্ণমেণ্টের সাহায্য করা উচিত। ইহা ছাড়া মোহসিন ফণ্ডের টাকা তাদেরই প্রাপ্য; কিন্তু তাহারা এক পয়সাও পাইতেছে না। আর একটা কথা proceedings এ আমার গতবারের speech ছাপা হয় নাই। আমার সঙ্গে অন্যান্য যাঁরা বাংলায় বোলেছে—তাদের speech ছাপা হয়েছে। আমি ( voices of interruption ) যে বক্তৃতা দিয়েছি তাতে clap পেয়েছি ৫।৭টা অথচ আমার বক্তৃতাই Proceedings এ উঠে নাই। খালি লেখা আছে মৌলবী আব্দুল আজিজ spoke in Bengali এ যদি হয় then I will speak in English এবারে বাংলা Reporter আছেন সেইজন্য আমি বাংলায় বোলছি। এবারে যদি আপনারা আমার বক্তৃতা উঠাইতে neglect করেন—( loud laughter and noise ) তাহলে ভবিষ্যতে ইংরেজিতেই বক্তৃতা দিব বলিয়া আশা করি।

সর্ব্বশেষে মন্ত্রীমহোদয়গণকে অনুরোধ করিতেছি, তাঁহারা যেন বাংলার মোল্লাদের মক্তবগুলিতে উপযুক্ত সাহায্য দিয়া তাহাদিগকে বাঁচিয়ে করেন; নচেৎ হাশরের দিন খোদাতালার নিকট দায়ী হইবেন।

**Mr. S. A. SALIM:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the provision of free and compulsory primary education is of great national importance. On the satisfactory solution of this problem depends the all-round progress of the peasantry of Bengal. In this respect, the opposition has an important role to play. In a democratic state, the opposition always assists the Government with their constructive suggestions and I shall invite the opposition here to render the same assistance to the Government as expected of them.

I shall request them to refrain from indulging in unnecessary and irresponsible criticisms of the Government. Sir, it is urged that primary education should be provided for the province without taxation. If this were possible, I would be the first person to welcome this and who is there who would not? But none can seriously contend that in the present state of Provincial Revenue it is a practical proposition. Sir, I am the Vice-President of the District School Board of my district and I have had an opportunity of coming in intimate contract with the people of the district. From my experience I can definitely say that the people of my district are prepared to have free and compulsory primary education at any cost. So far as I know this

is also the public opinion in many other districts. I shall request the hon'ble members of this House not to indulge in idealism that free and compulsory primary education is possible without imposition of the cess but to face the problem in a practical manner. When the peasantry of Bengal is prepared to have primary education even by payment of cess, one should not mislead them by raising false hopes in their minds that they would get primary education without any taxation. This may be good propaganda on the part of the opposition but this will not be conducive to the interest of the nation.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Spend the jute duty.

**Mr. S. A. SALIM:** The Hon'ble the Chief Minister who is also the Education Minister initiated the policy in the course of his budget speech last year that he would introduce free and compulsory primary education in a district if the M.L.A.'s representing that district would intimate to him that their district was prepared for the imposition of the cess. Sir, this was a practical approach to the solution of the problem and I am glad to note that free primary education has already been introduced in the district of Mymensingh and similar orders have already been passed with respect to the districts of Chittagong, Dacca, Comilla, etc. It is satisfactory to note that Government has provided an additional sum of Rs. 5 lakhs in the Education budget this year. I take it that this sum is only by way of supplementing the cess receipts for this year. It has been said that this sum is absolutely inadequate. But I shall request the hon'ble members who hold this view to remember that this sum has been provided only for this year. I maintain if a greater sum would have been provided, it would not be possible to spend the sum. I owe some explanation. The present Government has adopted the scheme which you formulated when you were the Education Minister. On the basis of that scheme my district will require a sum recurring to the extent of Rs. 10 lakhs. But the cess receipts will not exceed 6 lakhs so that my district alone would require another 4 lakhs from the provincial revenue on the basis of this calculation. Bengal will ultimately require about 60 to 70 lakhs from the provincial revenue when free compulsory primary education is introduced throughout the province. This year only the district of Mymensingh will require assistance from the provincial revenue, as the system has been given effect to only this year. And that district will not require so far my information goes, more than 2½ lakhs from the Government. The districts of Tippera, Chittagong, Dacca, where cess has been imposed cannot introduce free and compulsory primary education till next year, because one year at least is required for surveying and planning. Therefore those districts will require financial assistance from the Government next year to supplement their cess income. I hope the Government will be providing the sum

necessary for the purpose next year. I shall conclude my speech with this request to the Government that in view of the fact that their position has been misunderstood; the Chief Minister should clearly tell the House that he has undertaken to supplement the cess income of the districts and an increasing sum will be provided in successive years with a view to have ultimate provision of an additional sum of about 60 to 70 lakhs that may be considered necessary.

(The member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Mr. W. C. WORDSWORTH:** Sir, it is easier to speak for five hours than for five minutes on this difficult subject. In my five minutes I shall not try to develop any theory of taxation. When I was an official, in my unregenerate days, as part of my duty on two or three occasions I drew up schemes for universal primary education for the province; the lowest figure of cost I remember was 2½ crores in addition to current expenditure. The schemes I should explain are still there, though the schools are not. We have in Bengal schools enough for the education of the children if they were properly distributed and parents took their children to them. It may surprise many in this House to be told that Bengal has about three times as many elementary or primary schools as England and Wales. In my own country elementary education is compulsory. Everyone goes to school, so there are 5 to 6 million children in some 21,000 schools. In Bengal there are, I suppose, about two million children in over 60,000 schools, and the average per school works out to between 30 and 35. There is plenty of space in the schools for the children who want to go to them, but our chief difficulty at the moment is to get children to go and persuade their parents to send them.

It is necessary to have a drive of some sort, and I am glad to find that our Government has begun such a drive for education not only through the legislation that exists, but in other ways. Many schemes are at present before the public in India, and I could say a great deal about them. Let me say without further comment that I myself am not impressed by the proposal that tiny children in tiny schools should by their labour earn the cost of their education for which apparently their parents are unable to pay by their labour. I do not think that is a sound basis on which a system of primary education can be built up.

Other provinces have some peculiarity of system. We have none. Burma manages its primary education chiefly through its religious organisaiton. In the Central Provinces they have thought out the *vidya mandir*, which would be not only an endowed school but a centre of village improvement in many ways. In Bengal I suppose the Permanent Settlement would stand in the way of anything of the kind. In the United Provinces, I think I have read, they are trying to help

out their education by a system of quickly teaching people in the villages who do not go to school how to read, a quick method of making people literate. India should have a fine system of education for all. That is due to its dignity and its worth. But the spread of schools comes slowly; and meanwhile it is necessary for its own reasons that democracy should make as many people literate as possible. Is it not in our power in this province to do something in that way to help out our primary education for the time being? There are hundreds and thousands of educated young men roaming about our villages, eating their hearts out because they have nothing to do. There are thousands and millions of people who do not know how to read. Why should Government not spend a few lakhs of rupees and by small grants employ those young men in meeting this need and——

(The member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** I rise to lend my wholehearted support to the cut motion that has been moved by my friend Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed. Sir, you have allotted only 5 minutes' time to each speaker and as Mr. Wordsworth was saying 5 minutes is too short a time. However, I will speak only for a very few minutes and in doing so, I shall quote certain passages from a speech that the now Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq delivered on the occasion when the the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, the then Education Minister, piloted the Primary Education Bill through the then Legislative Council. Mr. Fazlul Huq said to-day this cut motion refers only to the fact that the agriculturists of the province should not be taxed, but that refers to the taxation of all: (Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Well that was years back.)

Mr. Huq then said "We have never made any secret of the fact that I am bitterly opposed to the Bill not because I am less anxious than even the Hon'ble Minister himself, to see a Bill introduced for primary education in Bengal, but because I feel very strongly that to tax an over-taxed people even on such a measure is an act of absolute cruelty to the teeming millions whose interests are in our sacred trust. I have always felt that it is the duty of the members of this House to think seriously before they saddle Bengal with a fresh tax amounting to Rs. 1 crore and 25 lakhs". Lower down he said "I think it is absolutely iniquitous on the part of Government to saddle people with taxation when they themselves are not coming forward to contribute their quota. Where is the country in the world where the civilized administration does not think it to be its paramount duty to provide for the education of the masses? It is said that zemindars make no contribution to the problem; right enough. But what about the responsibility of the Government itself? We cannot find the money because there are so many highly paid officers who are sucking the life-blood of the nation like vampires, and

we have therefore got a deficit budget. Sir, it is a disgrace to the civilized administration that to-day we are faced with the necessity of saddling poor Bengal with a tax amounting to Rs. 1 crore and 26 lakhs". With all humility, Sir, I have already said in the beginning that I would not make any long speech. But I would only remind the Hon'ble the Chief Minister, who is also the Minister for Education, that the speech he delivered then, even those words still ring too true now, and it is really a fact even now that you cannot tax an over-taxed peasantry, and that the agriculturists of the country are unable to bear any sort of extra burden. You will say where can we find the money, but, Sir, Government have provided a sum of Rs. 2 crores 25 lakhs for the Police. You can find some money from that source or from any other source if only you like. Since the time that you said that you cannot tax an over-taxed people, by becoming Education Minister and Chief Minister your responsibility has ennanced a hundred-fold. But, Sir, as I have said I do not want to make a speech but I only refer to his promise to-day that he has made to my scheduled caste friends that he will bring in a supplementary grant of Rs. 5 lakhs for their education. I hope, Sir, that we will soon hear him saying on the floor of this House that "the agriculturists of the province are over-taxed and therefore I will bring forward a supplementary demand to the extent of Rs. 1 crore and 26 lakhs." Sir, my friend Mr Hamiduddin says that this no-tax primary education is a propaganda by zemidars and others who probably ally themselves with zemindars. Therefore I hope the Khan Sahib would agree to what Mr. Fazlul Huq said on that occasion. Without making any further speech I will say that the words which Mr. Fazlul Huq uttered on that occasion—those words are true even to-day. Therefore with all humility I would ask him not to impose an equally iniquitous scheme on the poor tax-payers of this province to-day.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, it appears that two or three members still want to speak. Therefore I need not perhaps reply now.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** What I propose to do is to close the debate on primary education now, but I am not closing the debate on education itself. After that one or two general matters which have been brought to my notice, such as reformatory schools, labour matters, Madrassah education, and Youth Welfare—on these four, speeches will be allowed and after that I will close the debate.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, it is no use reading out from a speech which I may have delivered, because I always break

my promise made in a moment of irresponsibility, and the speech read out by Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed was delivered when I was in opposition and then the opposition seldom tells the truth, as is well-known!

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Those who tell the truth always tell the truth.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I am myself strongly opposed to any taxation whatsoever being imposed on the people of Bengal for introducing primary education. I admit that throughout the elections my election-cry was that if I am in power or if I get an opportunity I shall try to introduce primary education without taxation. Then when we formed the Coalition Party we made it the pledge of that party primary education shall be introduced without taxing those who are unable to bear the burden of taxation. Now, Sir, having given that pledge and holding the view that I expressed when the Bengal Primary Education Act was passed, I hesitated long before I put that Act into operation. May I point out to the House that on the occasion when I delivered that speech, the matter was pressed to a division and every single Moslem member of that House, every elected representative of the scheduled caste, voted solidly in favour of the motion for the imposition of taxation for primary education and the opinion was so overwhelming in favour of the Bill that, although I delivered that speech, I was forced to vote in favour of the Bill. I hesitated because I thought that some scheme could be worked out by which we could introduce primary education at a minimum cost, probably without taxation. But then, Sir, I waited in vain. Schemes were submitted to me but some of them were fit only to be sent to the Director of Public Instruction in Utopia. Then, Sir, I had to make up my mind by myself. Everyone told me that primary education must be introduced immediately and the problem could not await further attempts at solution. I was therefore faced with two alternatives, either to wait and receive suggestions for the purpose of having primary education without taxation or to start in primary education on the basis of a cess, and chose the latter alternative, because I felt convinced that there was a universal demand throughout the country that there should be primary education and a demand from the majority of the people that there should be primary education even at the expense of the imposition of a cess. Now, Sir, my friends who talk so lightly of primary education without taxation really forget the realities of the problem. We have got about a lakh of villages in Bengal. If you introduce primary education and start one school on an average in every village—and there are villages in some parts of Bengal, which are so big, where communications from one part to another are so lacking in effectiveness—that we should have

to start at least 2 schools in such villages. The number of schools that we ought to have in Bengal would then amount to 1½ lakhs. And if you spend about Rs. 300 on an average per school then you shall have to incur an expenditure—taking into account the capital expenditure and the ordinary equipment grants—of something like between Rs. 4 to 5 crores a year. Therefore, consider the magnitude of the problem. Can you depend entirely on private charity or on the taxation of one section of the people to raise this huge amount? It may be that in course of time some scheme may be developed, but at the present moment it is not correct to say that the cultivator does not pay for the education of his children. What is the amount that the Act requires the cultivator to pay?

Three and a half pice per one rupee of the *jama* he has to pay. If a man pays Rs. 10 he shall have to pay 8 annas a year. Is it not known to the members of this House that a cultivator spends more than eight annas for the education of his boys? If he has 2 or 3 boys he spends very much more. On this particular point I have collected certain figures. Recently I asked for figures for the districts of Dacca and Tippera and I found that as much as Rs. 1,33,000 in Dacca and Rs. 1,48,000 in Tippera were collected in the shape of fees from primary school boys. Over and above this, everyone knows that boys have to pay something in the shape of tobacco and *pan* to the *gurus* and also *mushti*. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that even at the present moment in those places where the tax has not been imposed, the cultivators have to pay some kind of voluntary taxes in the shape of fees for educating their boys. Therefore, it is no innovation to ask them to pay 3½ pice for every rupee of the *jama*. This, therefore, is the position, namely, whether you will wait till some scheme without further taxation is matured, or whether you will start immediately and have primary education with taxation. If at any time a scheme is found workable which can be implemented as a practical scheme without taxation, I for one will not be a party to the imposition of the primary education cess——.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Why not make it compulsory?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Education cannot be made compulsory unless it is made available to the people of a particular country. It is no use compelling a cultivator to send his son to school unless you can provide for him free primary education. You must make it free before you make it compulsory. We have not made it compulsory because we have not been able yet to introduce free primary education——

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** But the tax will be compulsory.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, the Primary Education Act is in English, and any one who understands English knows whether the tax is compulsory or not.

Now, Sir, up to this day 13 districts have got District School Boards, and in four of them education cess has been imposed. I have taken steps to have School Boards established in 5 more districts, and if all goes well, I hope, by April 1939, we will have primary education introduced in full in at least 12 districts out of the 25 districts in Bengal. I hope, this will be a good beginning. I would ask my friends in this House to remember that this tax is not being imposed as a matter of vengeance taken by the Government on an unwilling people. It is a sheer necessity which compels Government to go on with taxation on the basis of the cess provided for in the Primary Education Act. Sir, I wish to say one word regarding the Vidyamandir Scheme to which a reference has been made. So far as I am aware, no other province but the Central Provinces has been able to introduce any scheme for introducing primary education without taxation. As regards the Vidyamandir, I have before me an issue of the newspaper "Servant of India', dated the 3rd February, of Patna, under the heading "Compulsory Education' from which one gets the impression that the Vidyamandir Scheme has not been altogether a success and the writer concludes his article with a word of caution and says that Provincial Governments would do better to face the fact that universal primary education can only be advanced by taxation. They will be better utilising their time and opportunity in extolling the laws of taxation, instead of appealing to the public for private charity. Ministers will do better to secure popular support to their taxation proposal. He is no friend of universal primary education who depends on private charity for education. Here is the whole case in a nut-shell. I am not and I have never been in favour of taxing anybody for the purpose of introducing primary education, far less taxing the cultivators. But at the present moment and in the present circumstances, I have no other alternative than to prefer to go on with the introduction of primary education on the basis of the imposition of a tax under the 1930 Act, because I have not been able to discover a scheme which I can accept as an alternative of the scheme provided for in the Act. I say once again that if a workable scheme is put up before me, I will not only consider it, but I will get it examined by non-official experts and if I am convinced that that scheme leads to a practical solution of the gigantic problem, I assure the House that I will withdraw the taxation imposed under the Act and adopt the alternative suggested. But I do not think, I should allow the country to remain any more in illiteracy and disregard the warning given by the representatives of the people in this House to introduce primary education at the earliest

possible opportunity. What I have done is that I have consulted the members of this Legislature coming from particular districts. After all, each M.L.A. is responsible to his own constituency when he says that primary education cess should be imposed, even at the risk of imposing a fresh taxation and he says so with a full sense of responsibility, because he has to account himself to his own constituency. When a responsible man comes forward and says that he wants a tax to be imposed in order that we may have primary education, I do not see any reason why I should hesitate on my part, although I have been thinking differently. It is for this reason that I am proceeding on the basis of the advice given to me by the members of this House. Wherever I have found that the members of the Legislature are willing to bear the responsibility for the introduction of primary education on the basis of taxation, I have at once acceded to their demand, and I want to proceed on the basis of that policy. Therefore, the position is clear. We are not hesitating, we are not putting off matters, but we have taken up the matter entirely in our hands. We have started school boards in 13 districts, and are going to have 4 more in other districts, and as I have said, by April 1939, we may have primary education introduced in as many as 12 to 15 districts in the province of Bengal.

Sir, much has been said about the provision of Rs. 5 lakhs. A good deal of misapprehension exists about that. Five lakhs for primary education is ludicrous. It is not 5 lakhs which has been provided for introducing primary education in Bengal. Government already pay over 25 lakhs a year for helping primary education through district boards. This 5 lakhs allotted in the budget is for the improvement of the scheme of primary education, and the real policy of the Government scheme is the raising of money by taxation and Government supplementing the necessary money for carrying on this scheme into practical effect. I may mention, Sir, that apart from the cess fund which has been provided by Government we have made a start in four districts by providing Rs. 76,000 in this budget, the ultimate expenditure for these four districts alone coming to Rs. 18 and odd lakhs. And more money will have to be found, as time goes on, and the cess is imposed in the very near future, for the other districts. Everywhere the cess realised will be insufficient, and Government will have to supplement it by contributions from provincial revenues. Therefore, it is a misnomer to say that five lakhs has been provided for for the purpose of introducing primary education. Sir, I submit for the consideration of this House that it is not that we are not at all in sympathy with the object which Mr. Giasuddin Ahmad has in view, but in spite of my ardent sympathy with the object, I feel constrained to differ from him in practical application. I cannot accept it as a practical proposition to wait and see for some scheme to crop up. I cannot afford

to wait. The demand for primary education is coming from all quarters, and as I said in the speech on that occasion, it is a disgrace that in Bengal there should not have been a consistent Government policy towards the introduction of primary education, and that we should have allowed all these years to roll by without really having anything done for the introduction of primary education. I am going on that basis, but as soon as an alternative scheme is found out I will give up this cess, and go on with the alternative scheme if that satisfies really the wishes of our people. I have got nothing further to add.

The motion of Mr. Giasuddin Ahmed that the demand for Rs. 1,33,45,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by rupees one hundred being then put, a division was taken with the following result:—

**AYES.**

Abdul Hafeez, Khan Bahadur Syed.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed.
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Abul Fazal, Mr. Md.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Banerjee, Dr. Suresh Chandra.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Banerji, Mr. Satya Priya.
Bannerjee, Mr. Manoranjan.
Barma, Babu Premhari.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prasad.
Barman, Babu Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Bose, Mr. Sarat Chandra.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Mahim Chandra.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Babu Khagendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das, Gupta, Mr. Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Dutta Mazumdar, Mr. Niharendu.
Emdadul Haque, Kazi.
Fazlur Rahman (Mukhtear), Mr.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Giasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Mr.
Golam Sarwar Hossini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Hasan Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Syed.
Himatsingka, Mr. Prabhudayal.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr.
Maiti, Mr. Nikunja Behari.
Maitra, Mr. Surendra Mohan.
Maji, Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mazumdar, Mr. Birendra Nath.
Mal, Mr. Iswar Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Mr. Shyamaprasad.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. B.
Mukherji, Dr. H. C.
Mukherji, Dr. Sarat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Naskar, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Pain, Mr. Sarada Prosanna.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamakrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kishori Pati.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Sasaullah, Al-Haj Maulana Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Kalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr. M.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi.
Yousuf Mirza.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.

**NOES.**

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Bari, Maulvi.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hafiz Mia, Mr.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr.
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid Mr. A. M.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Sahib Maulvi S.
Abdur Rauf, Mr. Shah.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abidur Reza Chowdhury, Khan Bahadur.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hossain, Mr. Ahmed.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Acharyya Choudhury, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Aftab Hosain Jeardar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali, Khan Sahib Maulana Enayetpuri.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Aminullah, Maulvi.
Amir Ali, Md. Mia.
Armstrong, Mr. W. L.
Ashrafali, Mr. M.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Maulvi.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Campbell, Sir George.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Cresfield, Mr. L. M.
Das, Mr. Anukul Chandra.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Huq, the Hon'ble Mr. A. K.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr.
Ferguson, Mr. R. H.
Gomes, Mr. S. A.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Habibullah, the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hafizuddin Chowdhury, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Heman, Mr. F. T.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Sahib.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Khaitan, Mr. Debi Prosad.
MacGregor, Mr. G. G.
Mafizuddin Choudhury, Maulvi.
Maguire, Mr. L. T.
Mahtab, Maharajkumar Uday Chand.
Mahtabuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Millar, Mr. C.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Hosain Ali, Mr. Md.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Sahib Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Dr. Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruf Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nandy, the Hon'ble Maharaja Srishchandra, of Kasimbazar.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nausher Ali, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khawaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Noeruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Patton, Mr. W. C.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Raikut, the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Ray Choudhury, Mr. Birendra Kishore.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Ross, Mr. J. B.
Roy, the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarker, the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan.
Sassoon, Mr. R. M.
Sen, Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra.
Shahabuddin, Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khandkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tapuriah, Rai Bahadur Moongtu Lall.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahed Rahman, Maulvi.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 88 and Noes 122 the motion was lost.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I propose to close the debate on education at 7-45 p.m. So if any member wishes to speak, I will call upon him. In the meantime, I intend to call upon Mr. Crosfield to speak on matters connected with Education particularly Reformatory Schools. I also understand that Maulvi Md. Mozammel Huq wants to speak on Madrasahs. I hope both of them will be very brief.

**Mr. L. M. CROSFIELD:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on two points in connection with this general demand.

In his budget speech the Hon'ble Finance Minister made all-too-brief a mention of the expenditure of Rs. 30,000 for the furtherance of the physical educational programme in girls schools and colleges. This may seem to be a minor matter, but in fact it is one of the most important developments, and I trust that Government will undertake to pursue this policy vigorously from now on. I have had some opportunity of learning how important a step this is in raising the standard of physical fitness in the province, and I heartily commend the beginning which has been made and I hope that it will be continued on a really adequate basis.

The other point concerns Reformatories. At the invitation of Government, I had an opportunity this week of visiting the Reformatory and Industrial School at Alipore with other members of the legislature: and it is from personal observations made on that occasion that I wish to speak.

I could have wished that more members had taken advantage of this invitation, but those who did could not fail to be impressed by the kindliness as well as by the efficiency with which the boys are looked after. And I should like to pay a special tribute to the voluntary work done by Mr. Cohen on the Managing Committee which has been of the greatest assistance to the Institution. I hope the Hon'ble Home Minister will not think me ungracious if I venture a word of criticism: it became obvious to us as we went round that the schools are understaffed, particularly on the industrial side, and I hope that a scheme which, I understand, was put forward in this connection some years ago by the Managing Committee will be disinterred and given effect to. We were also struck by the fact that the buildings are unsuitable for the needs of an up-to-date Reformatory. We were, therefore, interested to learn of a scheme now in preparation to rebuild the Reformatory on the modern cottage principle outside Calcutta.

I hope that this scheme will be energetically pursued and further that Government will consider also a scheme for the building of up-to-date reformatories at suitable points in the province, because the care and education of the juvenile offender is a branch of nation-building of no less importance than many of those other branches with which Government are now dealing.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, will all the debates be lumped up?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** On a point of privilege, Sir. As a protest I shall walk out.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** What is your point?

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** My point of privilege is this. I wanted repeatedly to speak on this subject, and although you promised, I have not yet been given any chance to speak.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. That is not a point of privilege. This is a matter entirely within my discretion. You can certainly walk out, if you so desire. I am sorry you could not catch my eye and unless you catch my eye you cannot speak.

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** I did catch your eye several times.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I have not yet closed the debate, and if you think I am conducting the debate in a manner not to your liking, you are certainly at liberty to walk out, as you say or take such steps as you think proper.

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** Yes, I will walk out.

(Mr. Aftab Ali then left the Chamber.)

**Maulvi Md. MOZAMMEL HUQ** spoke in Bengali of which the following is an English translation:—

I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 1,33,45,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion on grants-in-aid to old scheme madrassahs in Bengal.

Mr. Speaker, I have brought this motion with a view to securing grants to the old scheme Madrassahs in Bengal. I therefore propose a cut of Rs. 100 out of the demand for education. (A MEMBER: "Is this why you have changed your cap to-day?) The reason why I have been repeatedly pressing my demand for it is that there is not much difference between the curricula of the New Scheme Madrassah and the High English School. But the Quoran and Hadis are taught in the old scheme Madrassahs. As a Moslem I want to emphasise it with all the strength I can command that whatever the progress that we may achieve through English education, there will be no national progress for us without religious advancement. The Quoran and Hadis are taught

in the old scheme Madrassahs. I have moved this motion simply with the object of making proper provisions for the education of those who try to post themselves up in the messages of Allah and His Rasul and to live as true men cherishing these messages in their hearts. Of the 132 old scheme Madrassahs in Bengal 62 are senior and 70 junior; the number of students in them being 7,377 and 4,233, respectively, that is, 11,610 in all. For the education of all these boys Government grant Rs. 200 a month to only one Madrassah (the Phurphura Madrassah). Except this, no other Madrassah receives any grants-in-aid, while grants-in-aid amounting to lakhs of rupees are sanctioned by the Government for other schools and colleges. Government pay no attention to all those boys who are in the old scheme Madrassahs to study religion. It is for this reason that I have taken up the cause of a number of helpless boys and regret to say that Government take no care of all those unfortunate boys who are eager to study the Quoran and Hadis, as also, of the Madrassah where the Quoran and Hadis embodying as they do the cardinal doctrine of the Moslem religion, a religion which we claim to be the greatest of all religions. This deplorable state of things should now be a matter of the past. I, therefore, request the Government that they may be pleased to make without delay due provisions for the maintenance of these old scheme Madrassahs of ours, in the same way as they provide for other forms of education. This is the object of my motion.

**Md. AMIR ALI MIA:**

جناب اسپیکر صاحب —

میں آپ کا شکرگذار ہوں کہ آپ نے چند منٹ مجھکو اسپیچ کا موقع دیا *

جناب من راجشاہی ٹاؤن میں مسلمان لڑکیوں کے تعلیم کے متعلق معقول ذرائع کی سخت ضرورت ہے - یہاں ایک جرلیر لڑکیونکا مدرسہ عرصہ سے جاری ہے - میں اسکی طرف گورنمنٹ کو توجہہ دلاتا ہوں - اس مدرسہ کی مالی حالت بہت ہی خراب ہے اور افسوس ہے کہ گورنمنٹ کو اسکا احساس نہیں ہے *

سنہ ۱۹۳۵ع میں جب گورنر بہادر یہاں تشریف لے گئے تھے تو دوران اسپیچ میں New College میں فرمایا تھا کہ اگر پبلک اس مدرسہ کے مکان کیلئے پانچ ہزار روپیہ جمع کرے تو میں دس ہزار روپیہ گورنمنٹ کے طرف سے دونگا - مگر ہنوز پبلک پانچ ہزار روپیہ فراہم نہ کرسکی اور

مکان کے متعلق کچھہ نہ ہو سکا - اسوقت یہ مدرسہ مسلم اسوسیشن کے مکان میں ہے - مگر جگہہ کی بڑی تنگی ہے - لڑکیونکی تعداد روز بروز بڑھتی جاتی ہے لیکن جگہہ کے کمی کے وجہہ سے بڑی کشمکش ہے ارز اراکین انتظام مدرسہ روپیہ کے عدم موجودگی کے وجہہ سے مکان بنانے سے مجبور ہیں - تاوقتیکہ گورنمنٹ اسکے طرف نظر نہ کرے اسکی ترقی کی کوئی صورت نظر نہیں آتی ہے اور مجھے خوف ہے کہ کچھہ روز اگر یہی حال رہا تو عجب نہیں کہ یہ مدرسہ ٹوٹ جائے *

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House may be inclined to hear some members of the House before the Hon'ble Chief Minister speaks in reply.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** All I can say is that under the rules the debate must be closed at 8 p.m. to-night: the maximum time is two days.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Under the rules the debate on Education should close at 7 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 7-30 Anglo-Indian Education, and Registration after that from 7-30 to 8, and we have come prepared according to that programme. But we do not know how long will this debate continue.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will close the debate immediately after the Hon'ble Chief Minister replies.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** On a point of order, Sir. Mr. Aftab Ali rose on a point of privilege and I have a word to say for your consideration in that connection. In this House a number of Labour members are representing labour and as such Labour is recognised under the Government of India Act as representing a special interest. From that stand point I think I should be right in submitting for your consideration the point that Labour should be given an opportunity of expressing its views on important issues affecting public matters as well as other matters in which Labour is interested, whether educational, social or otherwise. From that point of view I think my friend Mr. Aftab Ali was not wrong in insisting on the point that Labour should be heard and given an opportunity of expressing its views. And may I hope that you will kindly take this point of view into your consideration so that in future no such protest may be necessary.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am glad that you have raised this point. Half an hour before I informed the House that immediately after the discussion on Primary Education is finished there are three or four matters which I would take up for discussion without cut motions being moved and of which I mentioned Labour as one. I was waiting towards the close to raise the Labour matter but in the meantime Mr. Aftab Ali was so impatient that he thought it better to leave the Chamber and I could not help it.

I have all along recognised that all matters in which Labour is interested, whether it is a group or not, I will give them all facilities.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, I will begin by offering my thanks to Mr. Crosfield for the very valuable suggestions which he has made in the course of his speech. I confess I do not know the subject very intimately, but I am profoundly impressed by the remarks he has made and I promise to take action on the lines suggested by him.

Now as regards the madrassahs, I wish to make an announcement to this House, and I am glad that my friend, Mr. Mozammel Huq and several other speakers have brought this matter prominently to my notice. It is true, Sir, that the old-scheme madrassahs have been very much neglected of late. As a matter of fact, barring the Calcutta Madrassah, which is a Government institution, no old scheme madrassah, except the one at Furfura, receives anything like a maintenance grant from Government. What we have done is that we have provided for some financial assistance to the old-scheme madrassahs but I confess that that is not enough. A number of old-type madrassahs was given grants from my discretionary grant and it has been decided this year that Rs. 30,000 or thereabout should be allotted out of the additional provision of Rs. 70,000 for grants to non-Government madrassahs in the budget for 1938-39. It is also proposed to open a few more classes in the Calcutta Madrassah from July 1939.

The scheme that I have now in view is this: At the present moment there is the Board of Central Madrassah Examinations in Bengal which affiliates old schemes madrassahs, regulate their syllabus and studies and conduct examinations. I propose to abolish the Board of Central Madrassah Examinations, and in place of that, set up a sort of Senate—a sort of University to watch over all the old-scheme madrassahs in Bengal. The University will conduct examinations of the madrassahs, affiliate madrassahs, prescribe their courses of study and as a matter of fact, I hope that it will be a nucleus of a larger University in course of time which will not only impart religious education but also will impart secular education to the students.

I have got in view also a scheme to set up a similar board of studies for the improvement of *toll* and Sanskrit education in Bengal The improvement of *tolls* and the improvement of madrassahs will be my

first concern. I, therefore, assure my friends that the old-scheme madrassahs will no longer be neglected. The money that we have provided will go to provide grants both for old-scheme madrassahs as well as the new-scheme madrassahs. As regards Sanskrit *tolls*, I propose to set up a Board of Studies in consultation with the Sanskrit Board which exists at the present moment.

With these few words, I wish to assure my friends that the whole question of madrassah education is going to be put on a permanent footing by the introduction of a system which is somewhat on the lines of Muslim University.

The motion of Maulvi Mohammad Mozammel Huq was then, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** There is no time to take up the demand for Anglo-Indian Education. I will try to find some other time for the discussion of that motion. In the meantime I propose to utilise the few minutes left to give a ruling on the point which I promised to give on Monday last.

### Ruling on the effect and implications of a cut motion.

On Monday last a question was put to me as to effect and implications of a cut motion, as to whether such a cut motion being carried means a censure or non-confidence in the ministry. I promised to give my considered views in the matter later.

The fundamental convention is a democratic constitution working under any system of responsible Government is that, for the conduct of the executive and for the entire administrative and legislative actions and policy of Government the Ministers are immediately and directly responsible to the legislature and ultimately to the electorate In practice, this responsibility to the legislature is enforced by a vote of censure or of want of confidence or by defeat on a vital Government measure. Every one of these events implies that the ministry has no longer the confidence of the House and its necessary consequence is either the resignation of the ministry and the acceptance of Government by the opposition or a dissolution and an appeal to the electorate. The theory behind the dissolution is that Government is so convinced that it is right that it presumes the opinion of the legislature to be contrary to the wishes of the country and therefore decides to get the decision of the legislature tested by the verdict of the country.

It is now a settled convention of the British constitution that not only a vote of no-confidence but a vote on any issue of importance is also fatal to the continuation of the ministry in power. It is of course for the ministry to decide as to what is a vital vote. In practice, it may ignore and in fact does ignore defeats on a comparatively

minor issue on the assumption that it does not necessarily imply, loss of confidence. But even such defeat, however trivial, if not fatal, is damaging and is usually taken as a note of warning for the weakening of its prestige and position, as much as it is a definite weakening of the strength of its party ties. Tactically it is considered desirable for the Government not to accept defeat readily, for if a Government allows itself to be overridden even in minor matters, it encourages independence in its members which might lead to a more serious repercussion resulting in the ultimate defeat of Government on vital issues. Modern Governments, therefore, tend to treat most questions as questions of confidence and try to avoid defeats as much as possible. But the defeats do come now and then and it may be interesting to note the many instances of defeats not being accepted in the British constitutional history.

Sir Robert Peel's Government was defeated in 1834 on an amendment to the Address. From 1834 to March 1840 the Whig Government was defeated 58 times in the House of Commons. In 1841 it was defeatd on the sugar duties. In 1853 the Coalition Government was defeated three times in one week. Lord Rosebury's Government was defeated on a snap vote in 1894. Mr. Balfour's Government was defeated in the Committee of Supply on the Irish question in 1905. Mr. MacDonald's Government was defeated ten times between January and August 1924. In none of these cases the Government of the day resigned or appealed to the electorate as a consequence of these defeats. In 1924 Mr. MacDonald enunciated the policy of such defeats, to the extent to which the Government could suffer defeat on its own proposals, but it must be remembered, it was then a minority Government, allowed to continue on sufferance.

"The Labour Government will go out if it is defeated upon substantial issues, issues of principle, issues which really matter. It will go out if the responsible leaders of either party or any party move a direct vote of non-confidence, and carry that vote. If the House on matters non-essential, matters of mere opinion, matters that do not strike at the root of the proposals that we make, and do not destroy fundamentally the general intentions of the Government in introducing legislation—if the House wish to vary our propositions the House must take the responsibility for that variation—then a division on such amendments and questions as those will not be regarded as a vote of no-confidence."

What the Government will, therefore, treat as a matter of sufficient importance to warrant resignation or dissolution is primarily a question for the Government. It is based on the supposition that the opposition can always test the opinion of the House by a direct vote of no-confidence. Jennings in his "Cabinet Government" lays down

four factors which determine the attitude of Government to a parliamentary defeat. The first is the loss of its prestige, the second is the strength of its own cohesion, the third is the nature of the issue on which it has been defeated and the fourth is the importance of the proposal or matter on which it was defeated. A defeat, therefore, on an important part of the budget is obviously too important to be passed over. A definite statement that the Government will resign if a proposal is not accepted is a notice that the Government treats the motion as one of confidence. The circumstances may suggest that the defeat is in substance a vote of censure. Every one of this is a question to be judged on its own merits and beyond the principles outlined, it is not possible to give any more guidance.

The question remains as to what extent a member of a Government party can discuss grievances and move cut motions implying non-confidence of the Government proposal or policy. It has been the contention of the opposition in this House that a member belonging to Government party has no right to initiate budget cut motions or even to move such cut motions at any stage. It is according to them a fruitless waste of time, as such cut motions even if moved will surely be withdrawn. It is impossible to lay down any general principle as to what extent a member of a Government party is free to do this. In law, in theory every member of this House, to whatsoever party he may belong to, is entitled to take fullest advantage of the entire machinery and structure of legislative procedure. In practice, it depends on party strength, party discipline, party organisation and party cohesion as to how far a member of a party will be permitted to go counter to the decisions of party or to act as a free agent. But an answer to this quesion can only be given if we know what is going to be our attitude as to the future Government of this country. Should the legislature compose of individual members each of whom will take thought of the desirability of each proposal and will vote accordingly, or should the members vote according to the party decisions and the Government of the day carried on party principles. On the one hand the party system is said to be the best mechanism yet devised for the running of democratic constitutions responsible to the legislature and on the other hand, outside the active forum of party politics, there is a growing volume of opinion specially among the intellectual thinkers that party system inevitably leads to measures being discussed and voted not upon their intrinsic merits but upon the extraneous circumstances of its origin and label. It is not for me to say as to how the future will be evolved, but if the constitution is to be worked more or less on the party system, the contention is that all measures will be judged from the party labels and voted according to party alignments and that no party will ordinarily allow itself to be openly criticised and assailed on the floor of the House by its party members. Criticism from within its ranks is

much more dangerous and specially fatal to the continuance of any party than criticism from without.

In a parliamentery party system it is for the Cabinet representing and leading one that has a majority in the house and for its members to state the arguments for the Government policy and for the Opposition criticising and striving to discredit and supersede the party in power to state the arguments against, so that by the independent working of many minds on the same problem from different angles many aspects are brought to light and the legislature is enabled to reach a just and considered view. There are of course grave exceptional circumstances which lead to understandings behind the Speaker's chair when the Opposition does not oppose and allow measures to be passed through, but these are matters of momentous concern which are never discussed on party lines. But otherwise in a party system the entire structural form is so designed that in the open the Government and the Opposition are the two contending parties and their members must broadly be behind their respective flags.

In such a circumstance Government is run by the opinion of the party in power, formed in its party organisation, and subjected to searching criticism by the Opposition in the House. The theory is that the supporter of Government can always make his views heard and felt through the party and refrains from an open opposition on the floor of the House; while the Opposition may, and not infrequently does, by its criticisms, presented in such a manner as to influence opinion in the ministerial parties, induce the Government to modify proposals it has made. The contention of the opposition that the Government party has no place in the moving of cut motions is thus the correct position in all well-developed party system of Government, as such cut motion being carried means defeat of the Government proposal. The necessary corollary to what has been outlined before is, as has been stated by Devenport that the Cabinet can tolerate criticism of its budget, it can probably even survive the carrying of an adverse motion on the amounts of money it hopes to raise, it cannot as a rule survive one on the amount of money which it deems necessary to spend. On the other hand there is the inevitable danger, more and more realised by all thinkers that the logical outcome of any such rigid convention inevitably means that matters which are and should be debated from the point of view of finance are debated from the point of view of politics. The discussion of the financial affairs will always be debated and voted from purely partisan and party view points. Strict merits of economies will hardly be discussed in such circumstances detached from its political colour and nation may have to pay very dearly, what it should not on grounds of economy, which it must on grounds of politics. On the other it is said that criticism of Government by its own party members is always a compelling factor to modify its attitude, to qualify the

application of its principles without overthrowing the principles themselves and to agree to look over its shoulder much more quickly than criticism from without. In any case, Democracy in England has been worked on party lines. Government measure to be always accepted by the party in power, opposed by the party in opposition has been the governing keynote. But even there, with many opportunities of budgetary criticism—it is said there are eighteen opportunities—the fact that year after year the estimates emerge from the House of Commons exactly the same as they were presented, as if there was not a single item amidst millions and millions which should and could have been avoided, not a single expenditure which was unnecessary has provoked a good deal of critical thoughts and comments. It has been realised that however honest and just the economist may propose a diminution of expenditure required for supply on purely financial grounds, the matter will still be debated from the point of view of politics and not of finance. Under such condition parliamentary control of public finance by debates is reduced to an absurdity. On the other hand it is said that few questions can be debated with adequate knowledge and a parliament with near about 650 members occupied with other works and interests and frequently absent from the Chamber during discussions, with closely restricted time-limit, with no means to know the complex details of estimates and expenditure and certainly nothing to guide in the nature of expert assistance or to judge the ultimate repercussion of a deletion, with no opportunity to examine witness, should be the last body to go behind the deliberate decision of Government in budget. In the stress of war when economies were urgently called for in every branch of administration this aspect of the criticism and controversy was the subject-matter of a parliamentary enquiry. The National Expenditure Committee of 1917-18 very carefully enquired into the question of parliamentary control over national expenditure and they were definitely of opinion that the existing procedure of the House of Commons is inadequate to secure proper parliamentary control over the national expenditure. "The House will not be free to give them support so long as the present convention continues, which introduces into every division on a proposal of the Government of the day—however unimportant, however remote from broad considerations of national policy—the question of confidence or want of confidence in the Government. It is plain that if, on a division of some minor economy in a departmental estimate, a majority adverse to the Government is to be regarded as censure, even as a reason for its resignation, or for subjecting the country to a general election, the smaller issue must be completely eclipsed by the larger and that a decision of the merits of the particular question must become impossible. Only when the House of Commons is free not merely in theory and under the forms of the constitution, but in fact and in custom, to

vote, when the occasion requires, upon the strict merits of proposed economies, uncomplicated by any wider issue will its control over the national expenditure become a reality." The Committee, therefore, recommended that there should be appointed in each session two standing committees on estimates each consisting of 15 members and if possible a third if experience shows this to be desirable with the duty of considering the annual estimates and to report to the House any economies which they regard as desirable without raising questions of policy and it was further recommended that it should be established as a practice of parliament that members should vote freely upon motions of reductions made in pursuance of the recommendations of the Estimate Committee and that the carrying of such a motion against the Government of the day should not be taken to imply that it no longer possessed the confidence of the House. There are other recommendations about this but as far as I am aware these recommendations have not yet been given effect to in so far the right of free voting is concerned.

But with all these, in England the party system and Government on party lines has successfully worked as there is always an intelligent and alert public opinion always assessing measures on their own merits and at their proper perspective, and within recent times there have been several instances of Government of the day being forced to come in line with public opinion much against its own decision by sheer inertia of public opinion.

The National Government of 1934 introduced the Incitement to Disaffection Bill to provide powers to protect the armed force from propaganda. They had an unprecedented majority in the House yet there was such a widespead outcry in the country and modern techniques of propaganda—press articles and letters, pamphlets and meetings were so vehemently used to attack the Bill that Government soon realised that it was not gaining strength and substantial amendments had to be accepted and the Bill was passed very different from the Bill as presented, by sheer force of public opinion. In the recent case of the Anglo-French proposals for a settlement of Italo-Ethiopian dispute in 1935, the proposals were agreed upon by the Foreign Secretary and the French Prime Minister, presented to the Cabinet and accepted, but immediately there was spontaneous outburst in the country and on all sides of the House, and with a comfortable majority of 250 as a result of general election only three weeks before, the public outburst was so strong that the Cabinet had to reconsider the situation and Sir Samuel Hoare had to resign as a disavowal of the entire people against the foreign policy.

To maintain themselves in power there has thus always been a strong sensitiveness to public opinion and compelling obedience to it and all

the instruments in the possession of a free people are always exercised of to make its wishes and views effective if it chooses to; the temperature of the country determines the temperature of the House and the temperature of the House determines the activities of Government. But it is behind such strength of public opinion that party system has successfully worked in the British constitution amongst many conventions, understandings and agreements between different sections in the House, which no writer can easily formulate.

It is not for the Speaker to say whether the Government of this Province should be carried on party principles or otherwise. I have tried to give an indication as how it should work, if it is decided to work on party lines. I have also placed before the House its likely effect on financial control and scrutiny by the House and it should be for the House to determine, should it work on party lines, whether we should not bear in mind the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on national expenditure of 1917-18. But profited by the report and the recommendations of the Committee that I have so far allowed cut motions to be moved by Government party, on the belief that they will not be pressed to a division, to enable the members of the Government party to suggest economies, to draw attention or to get a statement of Government policy and programme and they will be free to do so unless they themselves wish to follow the strict party convention, as outlined above.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQ:** But, Sir, what is the ruling?

**Mr. CURTIS MILLAR:** In view of your ruling, Sir, which I understand to be that in any party system of Government the correct constitutional procedure, (I hope, Sir, you will please correct me if I have misheard you,) is that Government parties have no place in the moving of cut-motions, we in this party shall not in these budget debates move any cut-motion so long as a party system is in force in this House, and so long as we are a party supporting the ministry. We understand that it is always open to members of this House to speak on the general motion and that by agreement between the parties a certain order of precedence was granted by you, Sir, after consulting with Party Leaders. We would desire, while moving no cut-motion, to reserve our right to speak in this House on demands in the order of precedence which you, Sir, decided.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Before we close to-day, Sir, may I submit that you will kindly decide that to-morrow we may meet again after lunch?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Well, that is for the House to decide.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** If we do not sit to-morrow again, it will be impossible for us to finish the whole business. There is also Anglo-Indian Education and Registration remaining on our hands to-day.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** In any case I am not taking Anglo-Indian Education and Registration to-day.

But what is the option of the Leader of the House?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I am afraid, Sir, that a large section of this House is against that suggestion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I adjourn the House till 10-30 a.m. to-morrow, and this matter of sitting after lunch may be decided then. We will take up Irrigation and Civil Works to-morrow as was proposed in the original programme.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 10-30 a.m., on Saturday, the 19th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 19th March, 1938, at 4 p.m.

### Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 208 members.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

### (to which oral answers were given)

### Malaria in Mymensingh.

*251. **Mr. AMRITA LAL MANDAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the period from 1st January, 1937, up to the end of December, 1937—

(*i*) the number of people attacked with malaria in the district of Mymensingh; and

(*ii*) the number of deaths due to this attack?

(*b*) What was the opinion of the experts as to the nature of the outbreak of malaria?

(*c*) If the outbreak was of a serious nature what steps, if any, did the Government take to cope with the situation?

(*d*) Was any medical help rendered?

(*e*) If so, what amount of quinine were distributed to the poor villagers?

(*f*) Were any doctors employed for the purpose?

(*g*) If so—

(*i*) what was their number, and

(*ii*) in which centres were they employed?

**MINISTER in charge of the PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali):** (*a*) (*i*) The figures are not available.

(*ii*) 39,526.

(*b*) and (*c*) A statement is laid on the Library table.

(*d*) and (*f*) Yes.

(*e*) The District Board distributed 1,125 lbs. of quinine and cinchona from their own fund and 1,253½ lbs. of quinine and cinchona from Government fund.

(*g*) (*i*) In addition to 73 permanent doctors, 105 temporary doctors were employed by the District Board for malaria epidemics.

(*ii*) A statement is placed on the Library table.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Is it a fact that in Iswarganj thana in village Dohali, 60 per cent. of the population died of malaria?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am not aware of this; I would ask for notice.

**Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL:** With reference to answer (*e*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government engaged any additional doctors to cope with the rise of malaria in Mymensingh district?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am sorry, I cannot give any reply off-hand.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any preventive measures were taken by these doctors, or only curative measures?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The steps taken have already been stated in the statement laid on the table.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Were these doctors supplied with a sufficient stock of medicines or did they only distribute quinine?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am afraid. I cannot add anything to what has already been stated in the statement.

**Malaria in the jurisdiction of Panchkura, Tamluk subdivision.**

***252. Dr. GOBINDA CHANDRA BHAWMIK:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether there was any severe epidemic of malaria last year in the jurisdiction of Panchkura police-station of the Tamluk subdivision or not;

(*ii*) what was the number of deaths; and

(*iii*) how many persons died in Union Nos. 8, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 from August to December last?

(*b*) What steps, if any, the Government took to prevent the malaria?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) The total number of deaths from all causes in Panchkura thana in 1937 was 3,754.

(*iii*) The total number of deaths from all causes from August to December, 1937, was 860 in these Unions.

(*b*) A statement is laid on the Library table.

**Mr. DEBENDRA LALL KHAN:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the district headquarters of Midnapore are affected badly with malaria and that most of the cases are of malignant type?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid, the main question relates to the Tamluk subdivision and not to the district headquarters of Midnapore.

**Tube-well in village Ranahijal of Soair Union, Mymensingh.**

*253. **Mr. ABDUL HOSAIN AHMED:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that a Government tube-well was sunk at the house of the Head Clerk in the office of the Subdivisional Officer of Netrakona in village Ranahijal of Soair Union, police-station Mohanganj in the district of Mymensingh; and

(*ii*) the said tube-well was first proposed to be sunk in a locality of Muslims of that village on receipt of a contribution of Rs. 60?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative—

(*i*) what are the reasons for the change of the locality; and

(*ii*) whether the Hon'ble Minister is considering the desirability of making an enquiry into the matter?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) (*i*) Yes. The Head Clerk contributed Rs. 75 towards the cost of the tube-well which is used by the public.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the total expenditure incurred for this tube-well?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am sorry, I cannot answer the question off-hand.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Has any undertaking been given by the head clerk that the public will be permanently allowed to use this tube-well?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I would ask for notice.

**Establishment in the Public Health Department, Engineering Branch.**

***254. Mr. MONMOHAN DAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the total number of service-holders existing at present in the Public Health Department, Engineering Branch; and

(*b*) the number of them belonging to the caste Hindus, Muhammadans and the Scheduled Castes?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) 107.

(*b*) Caste Hindus 77, Muhammadans 26 and Scheduled Castes 2.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many of these appointments were made during the incumbency of the present Ministry?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I would ask for notice.

**Public Health Establishment.**

***255. Maulvi MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of (1) Muslim, (2) Hindu, and (3) Christian clerks in the Public Health Establishment;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that the post of a gazetted officer in the office of the Public Health Establishment is due to fall vacant in the current year; and

(*c*) if so, whether he is considering the desirability of appointing a Muslim to this post?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) and (*c*) Yes.

*Statement referred to in the answer to clause (a) of starred question No. 255.*

| | Permanent. | Temporary. |
|---|---|---|
| Muslims .. .. .. | 16 | 11 |
| Hindus .. .. .. | 45 | 14 |
| Christians .. .. .. | Nil | Nil. |

**Grant under the head "Rural Water Supply".**

***256. Khan Bahadur Maulvi ABIDUR REZA CHOWDHURY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for the last 5 years—

(*a*) the amount of grant under the head "Rural Water Supply" from Provincial Revenues to each Division, separately; and

(*b*) the principle followed by the Government in distributing the above grant to different Divisions?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) The grant for the year 1930-31 was distributed on the basis of the expenditure on water supply by District Boards during the year 1928-29 in each Division, regard being had also to the special needs of each Division. The same principle was followed in making the distribution during the successive years.

A portion of the allotment thus made is utilised in making grants to District Boards in reduction of interest charges on loans granted by Government under the Rural Water Supply Loan Scheme. The figures given above exclude the grants thus made to individual District Boards in the Division.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of starred question No. 256.*

| Division. | 1932-33. | 1933-34. | 1934-35. | 1935-36. | 1936-37. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs | Rs | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| Burdwan .. | 67,686 | 67,099 | 59,099 | 59,099 | 55,785 |
| Presidency .. | 57,000 | 57,000 | 51,000 | 51,000 | 48,450 |
| Dacca .. | 36,000 | 36,000 | 31,500 | 31,500 | 29,630 |
| Chittagong .. | 11,677 | 11,677 | 10,677 | 10,677 | 10,767* |
| Rajshahi . | 47,000 | 47,000 | 41,500 | 41,500 | 39,030 |
| Total .. | 2,19,363 | 2,18,776 | 1,93,776 | 1,93,776 | 1,83,662 |

*Including Rs. 800 extra as special cess.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why in the Chittagong Division where the population is 13·8 per cent. of that in the whole province of Bengal, only 5 per cent. of the Government grant has been spent?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The principle is not based on population ratio; the principle has already been stated in answer to question (*b*).

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Has this 5 per cent. contribution been continued even in the year 1937-38?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** May be, because according to the principle that perhaps is the share due to Chittagong.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Has the Government made any survey of the total demand and supply of drinking water to all the villages?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think, I have more than once stated in the House that a survey is under contemplation.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** How long will Government take to complete the survey?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It is very difficult offhand to give an answer to that, but if the honourable member wants it I can show him the whole scheme.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Is the Government prepared to review the principle that has been enunciated in answer to question (*b*)?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The whole question of water supply is under my consideration at present. Therefore, these things will also be considered.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Has the Hon'ble Minister considered the desirability of formulating a scheme to supply drinking water in rural areas throughout the province within a year or two?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question has been answered just now.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** What I want to know is whether he can give an approximate time?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It is very difficult for me to give an answer to that question.

## Maladministration of the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation.

***257. Maulvi MOSLEM ALI MOLLAH:** With reference to the answer to the supplementary question asked by Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy arising out of unstarred question No. 40 regarding maladministration in the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation, will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement of the allegations referred to in his answer?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Statements are laid on the table.

*Statement referred to in the reply to starred question No. 257.*

STATEMENT OF THE NORTH CALCUTTA CONGRESS COMMITTEE.

NORTH CALCUTTA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

উত্তর কলিকাতা রাষ্ট্রীয় সমিতি।

*President:*

Sures Chandra Majumder

*Secretary:*

Sudhir Kumar Ghosh.

1/1, Shampooker Street,

Calcutta, the 13th December, 1937.

Appointment of a Special Officer for the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation.

I have been asked by our Corporation Standing Committee to issue the following statement regarding above:—

The ratepayers of Calcutta are aware that due to various ugly revelations of malpractices and widespread corruption prevalent in the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation there is a move for appointing a Special Officer for six months to reorganise and reform the department in question.

Since the last general election of the North Calcutta District Congress Committee our Corporation Standing Committee is trying to the

best of its ability to serve the ratepayers of Calcutta and to help in the reorganisation of the Corporation on a true Congress ideal. As such we naturally lent our support to the appointment of the Special Officer. As for ourselves we do not hold any brief either for the Mayor or any Councillor or Officer of the Corporation.

Our attention has been drawn to a recent Press statement issued in this connection by our friend, Councillor S. C. Roy Choudhury. We are extremely sorry to note that though we have most carefully gone through the same we fail to find any definite constructive proposal for wiping out the widespread and deep-rooted corruption in the Building Department as he himself acknowledges. On the contrary it smacks of the traditional party squabbles in the Calcutta Corporation and is a veiled attack on the Mayor. From a young man of Sj. Roy Choudhury's stamp, we expected something better.

Now to come to the point Sj. Roy Choudhury is of opinion that no useful purpose will be served by the projected appointment and a huge sum of the ratepayers' money will be wasted for nothing though he has tacitly avoided to mention the specific amount, i.e., Rs. 9,000 in all, which for Calcutta Corporation, as it is administered now, is practically nothing. We also do not desire that any money of the ratepayers is wasted but may we ask as to how the present state of affairs of the Building Department will be put in order? Sj. Roy Choudhury for this blunt admission we wonder at his anxiety to save ratepayers' money just at the present moment and ask him in all humility as to where was this wisdom of his when he lent his support for sanction of a blank cheque to the Chief Executive Officer, for his European tour?

In course of our work in the Corporation Committee we have often come across cases in which relevant files lost sight of since 1925 have been unearthed in 1937, resolutions tampered, contents of the files substituted, vital conditions of the conditional sanctions of the Building Committee overlooked and cases illegally dealt with. These matters evidently prove that unless the department in question is thoroughly overhauled the present state of affairs will not change and who is to do these things. No doubt Councillors will have to co-operate but still a man must be there with executive and technical knowledge.

Many things may be attributed to the Councillors' interferences but may we ask as to who influenced the Building Executives in allowing wide deviations from the sanctioned plans in the cases of premises Nos. 35, 35/A, Plots 1 of 2, Kankulia Road, who induced the executive to suppress the file of premises No. 9, Chowringhee Lane, causing huge loss of money of the Corporation? Forsooth of these disorders some lakhs and lakhs of rupees have been left underground by way of unrealised encroachment fees for foundation and footings. As a matter

of fact it is due to the little opportunity that the Mayor had that collections of encroachment fees show Rs. 1,80,000 within these 7 months of the current year as against Rs. 1,55,000 of the previous year.

In this connection certain resolutions have been cited and in reply we have to point out that giving water connections or working permissions do not mean that the party can go on merrily with constructions according to his sweet will but only for the purpose of foundation work subject to the authority of the Corporation to stop the work at any time if it so desires and if the situation so necessitates. Again from these resolutions it can never be inferred that the encroachment fees should not be realised or the Executive should not take effective steps for which the D.B.S. and B.I. are there but if in spite of these parties do make unauthorised constructions or fail to pay encroachment fees in time it leads to this irresistible conclusion that the Executive have been out to their own advantage and neglect their duties, and the above instances clearly show that the departmental heads take ten times more advantage in every one case of Councillors' interference.

Sj. Roy Choudhury has also referred to a motion of no-confidence against Building Committee No. I of the last year. It was no doubt a laudable move but we have clearly shown above that only the change of personnel of a committee will not set the house in order. The Department including the committees shall have to be rehauled.

We think that at this juncture appointment of the Building Enquiry Committee is a move in the right direction and if the labours of the Committee are to be crowned with success we are of opinion that a Special Officer with technical and administrative knowledge is essentially necessary and we hope that in the interests of the ratepayers of Calcutta, the Councillors should immediately sanction the appointment.

SUDHIR KUMAR GHOSH,

*Secretary,*

*North Calcutta Congress Committee.*

Section 16, C.M.C. Act, 1923, permit the Government to call for any papers or to send an agent to enquire and to see personally all such papers.

QUESTIONS RE SOME IRREGULAR CASES OF THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT.

*8-11-37.*

*No. 35, Kankulia Road—*

**(1) Was the above building sanctioned by the Building Committee, dated 12-1-31?**

(2) Was the sanction obtained on the City Architect's report that the party would set back the house by 6 feet instead of splaying the corner?

(3) Has the building been set back by 6 feet?

(4) If not, was it due to its ownership?

(5) Is Sm. Nihar Nalini Sarkar of 5/2, Kankulia Road, the owner of the building?

(6) What is her relation with the City Architect?

*Nos. 26/1A, 26/1B, Grey Street—*

(1) Was a proposal for construction of balconies and a gangway over the side space rejected by the Building Committee?

(2) Is it not a fact that the same balconies and the gangway over the side space was actually constructed even before the said plans were rejected by the Building Committee?

(3) What action did the Building Executive take against this unauthorised construction?

(4) Was any notice served or police posted?

(5) Is it a fact that large amount of encroachment fees of the Corporation have been lost in this case by the negligence of the executive?

(6) What action the Chief Executive Officer proposes to take against the Surveyor concerned?

*No. 16, Shampooker Street—*

(1) How many times additions and alterations were carried out in the above premises since 1928?

(2) What action did the Surveyor take against such unauthorised construction?

(3) Is it a fact that a Surveyor of the Building Department supervised the unauthorised construction of additions and alterations to the building in 1936?

(4) Is it not a fact that the body of the file was tampered by the same Surveyor?

(5) Did the same Surveyor tamper the file of No. 2, Lakshmi Dutta Lane?

(6) Does the Chief Executive Officer maintain that services of such officials are absolutely necessary in the interest of the Corporation?

(7) What action did the Chief Executive Officer take against the offender in question?

STATEMENT OF MR. NIRMAL C. SEN.

Nirmal C. Sen,
M.A., B.Sc., B.L.,
Advocate.

Telephone South 1178.

75-A, Ashutosh Mukerji Road,
Bhowanipur, Calcutta.

2nd February, 1938.

To

The Hon'ble MAULVI SYED NAUSHER ALI,
Minister-in-charge of Public Health and Local Self-Government,
Bengal.

DEAR SIR,

*Re* Buildings Department, Corporation of Calcutta.

Herein is enclosed a statement of facts relating to premises No. 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road. This is a typical case. In majority of cases where Building Rules under the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, have been infringed, it will be found that one or another of the Councillors exercised his personal influence in the matter and forced the hands of his colleagues to relax the Rules. Broadly speaking violation of the Building Rules has become the common practice, for demolition of unauthorised structures seldom takes place. It will be interesting to know what are those weighty considerations which constantly induce the City Fathers to render their charter of existence nugatory.

The usual way of conduct of business in the Building Committee is most reprehensible in that the Councillors seem to be totally indifferent to the possible harm to properties other than those under their consideration arising out of their resolutions in regard to disputed matters. In majority of cases where the Building Rules are relaxed, titles of contiguous owners become clouded. Most often matters are decided arbitrarily on motions by Councillors in the absence of the Objectors who are said to be not entitled to notices of motions even if they have entered in their protests. Although the aggrieved parties may seek relief in appropriate Courts of Law making Calcutta Corporation a party defendant, yet the broad question arises as to why should an autonomous statutory body in the position and circumstances of Calcutta Corporation endowed with *quasi* judicial *cum* executive authority, pursue an irresponsible policy of interfering with ratepayers' rights to properties and compel them to take to litigations, the costs of which, again, have been made prohibitive by the Government. Is it the intention of the Government and Calcutta Corporation alike that the rich shall be preserved at the cost of the poor and the latter shall go without protection and relief?

There is a patent tendency in the Building Department where the indoor employees seem to be too many than it is good for the Corporation, to shelve the cases of unauthorised structures. The matter requires a thorough investigation. If the Objector is extraordinarily persistent, the case may end in a simple fine to the delinquent. Actual demolition is seldom carried out or countenanced.

A committee is said to have been appointed to enquire into the irregularities in the Building Department. In spite of our endless complaints and correspondence regarding the above premises, we were not called in to give evidence nor do we know if our case was considered by the committee. This case, if enquired into, will reveal almost all the phases of irregularities that obtain in the Building Department.

In these circumstances I would earnestly request you to consider the desirability of appointing a tribunal for a public enquiry into the affairs of the Corporation.

I am
Yours faithfully,
N. C. SEN.

Encl.
Statement of facts.

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*Re* 78, Asutosh Mukerji Road, District IV, Calcutta.

The above premises, formerly known as 79, Russa Road North, abuts on and has a large frontage on Asutosh Mukerji Road, and belongs to Holding No. 61. The present owners are Messrs. Nagendra Nath Saha Roy and others.

To the south of the above premises lies a passage, measuring approximately 100′ × 5′ 8″ on an average, leading to and forming the only way of approach from Asutosh Mukerji Road to the premises Nos. 75-A and 75-B. This passage along with premises Nos. 75-A and 75-B was formerly known as premises No. 78, Russa Road North, and forms Holding No. 62. This passage of Holding No. 62 has all along been separated from Holding No. 61 by means of a brick-wall running underground to a depth of more than 5 feet along the entire northern side of the passage. At no point of time these two holdings belonged to the same owner. Smart's Map confirms these facts.

To the south of the above passage is situate the premises No. 77, Asutosh Mukerji Road, formerly known as 77, Russa Road North, belonging to Messrs. Ramaprasad Mookerjee and Brothers.

The previous owner of 78, Russa Road North, was the late Mr. Saraju Kumar Majumder. His son, Mr. Charu Kumar Majumder, now owns

75-B, Asutosh Mukerji Road. Dr. Hem Chandra Sen purchased 75-A, Asutosh Mukerji Road, along with the above passage for valuable consideration from Mr. S. K. Majumder in 1922.

The previous owners of 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road, submitted plans for rebuilding the premises from time to time but the same were rejected for non-compliance with the Building Rules of Calcutta Corporation. None of these owners ever put forward any claim to the above passage.

Messrs. N. N. Saha Roy & Ors. claimed in 1933 first that there was a right of way over the above passage in favour of 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road, admitting the ownership of Dr. H. C. Sen in the passage. In view of the fact that the old house was a condemned one (and later a portion thereof collapsed all on a sudden) and that all rights of easements in its favour would terminate with its demolition, they claimed that the above passage was a "common passage" on the ground that it was described to be The Southern Boundary of 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road, on their Deed of Purchase.

Mr. R. P. Mookerjee stated before the Building Committee that the passage was not a common passage but belonged exclusively to Dr. H. C. Sen. Formerly premises Nos. 77 and 78, Russa Road North, belonged to the same person.

The Committee referred the matter on 21-11-1933 to the Law Officer of the Corporation for opinion. Dr. H. C. Sen produced all the title-deeds of his own and his predecessors-in-interest and Smart's Map while Messrs. Saha Roy & Ors. produced their recent Deed of Purchase only. The first plan of and the title-deeds of the predecessors-in-interest of Messrs. Saha Roy & Ors. regarding 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road, were never produced. Their case was argued by Councillor Dhirendra Nath Ghosh. The Law Officer shifted on Dr. H. C. Sen the onus of proving that the passage was not a common passage. His decision was not communicated to Dr. H. C. Sen, but an extract thereof was published in the Agenda of the Committee Meeting on 28-1-1935 under Item No. 64 as follows:—

"I do not however see much force in this contention and having regard to the fact that neither the applicant nor the objector has in my opinion been able to establish his exclusive title to the passage I am inclined to hold that the Committee may proceed on this basis that the passage is or at least has been used as a common passage appertaining to both the premises Nos. 73 and 75, Asutosh Mukerji Road."

On 28-1-1935 before the Committee Councillor D. N. Ghosh pleaded for Messrs. Saha Roy & Ors. The Committee directed Messrs. Khaitan, Cohen and Natabar Dutt to inspect the site in presence of the Ward Councillors and to report.

The above Sub-Committee inspected the site on 4-3-1935 when Dr. H. C. Sen and Mr. R. P. Mookerjee produced all their deeds of title while Messrs. Saha Roy & Ors. stuck to their Deed of Purchase only. The Sub-Committee examined the Smart's Map also. Here too Councillor D. N. Ghosh who was then in mourning. Mr. Khaitan suggested a compromise. The parties accepted his proposal and accordingly on 13-6-1935 the Building Standing Committee passed the following resolution:—

"The Committee observed that they were not considering the title of the Parties. Resolved that the appeal regarding 73, Asutosh Mukerji Road, be allowed subject to the Party providing 2 feet 6 inches space throughout the entire length on the South and throwing the same into the land adjoining it which has been called a Common Passage by the Party, cancelling the privy marked *A B C D* on the plan and giving an undertaking not to ask or apply for the same in future."

Messrs. Saha Roys started construction some time between 13-6-1935 and 20-6-1935. On 17-7-1935 the District Health Officer informed Dr. H. C. Sen that formal sanction had not till then been given to the plan. A large hall was soon completed and a cloth shop started by the owners therein. About a dozen people live in the shop but up till now no sanitary arrangement has been provided for them. They use the remains of the old privy now disconnected which has become a positive nuisance. The District Health Officer seems to be indifferent to the matter.

The construction progressed by stages and on 12-3-1937 it was found by the Corporation on measurement that the terms of its resolution on 13-6-1935 had been violated and encroachment made on the 2 feet 6 inches space on the South of the premises. Later it was found that no undertaking had been given as required by the said resolution.

After much complaint the matter was placed before the Building Committee on 6-9-1937 when prosecution of the delinquents was directed. Since then no information can be had regarding the above matter.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is it a fact that in the opinion of the Enquiry Committee appointed by the Building Committee Nos. 1 and 2 of the allegations contained in the letters have been found to be unfounded and false?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid, the only question which would be relevant would relate to the representation but the details of it can not be the subject matter of this question.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is it a fact that the allegations were found to be unfounded and false?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question, as I have already said, does not arise.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of order, Sir. In view of your ruling just given, that it would not be fair to go into the details of complaints against certain department of the Corporation as are given in the statement laid on the table, could you not by virtue of your power decide not to incorporate in the proceedings such details in that statement as in your judgment it would not be fair to go into details?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will see to this matter.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that the Calcutta Corporation including the Europeans has accepted the recommendation of the Enquiry Committee without a division?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I know nothing about the result of that Enquiry Committee.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** With regard to the statement of the North Calcutta Congress Committee, is the Hon'ble Minister aware that a disclaimer has been published in the "Amrita Bazar Patrika," and if so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the truth or otherwise of this disclaimer?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That he cannot say. You may ask whether his attention has been drawn.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** I do say Sir whether the attention of the Hon'ble Minister has been drawn to the disclaimer, and if so whether he will be pleased to state the truth or otherwise of this disclaimer?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, my attention has been drawn to this disclaimer and if you would permit me I would like to clear up the whole situation. There were two statements, one headed "Appointment of a Special Officer for the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation", and the other headed "Questions regarding some irregular cases of the Building Department". These two papers were received by me by post on the 11th of January 1938. The statement headed "Appointment of a Special Officer, etc.", the whole of it, including the signature of the Secretary, namely, Sudhir Kumar Ghosh was in print excepting the last part "Section 16, C.M.C. Act 1923, permit the Government to call for papers or to send an

Agent to enquire and to see personally all such papers" which was in manuscript. So far as the paper headed "Questions regarding some irregular cases of the Building Department" this was in type unsigned by anybody. Now when these papers came to me I asked my Secretary to ascertain whether it really proceeded from the Secretary of the Congress Committee, because it was not addressed to anybody, not to me—

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Not addressed to Government?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Not addressed to Government. I am making it absolutely clear. The typed paper was unsigned and the contents of the other paper including the signature were in print. So, my Secretary wrote a letter to the Secretary of the North Calcutta Congress Committee, which ran as follows:

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Are we concerned with all these Sir?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think the Hon'ble Minister might be short. This question is quite pertinent.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** All right, Sir, I will be short.

My Secretary wrote this letter:—

"Dear Sir,

The Hon'ble Minister, Department of Public Health and Local Self-Government, has received by post the following papers:—

(1) Printed circular letter headed "North Calcutta Congress Committee" and purporting to be issued from 1/1, Shampooker Street with date the 13th December 1937 on the—

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** What is the date of this letters?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** This is dated the 14th January 1938.

subject 'Appointment of a Special Officer for the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation', and bearing your name in print as the signatory in your capacity as Secretary, North Calcutta Congress Committee, and

(2) A typed sheet of paper with the heading 'Questions regarding some irregular cases of the Building Department, dated the 8th November 1937' in which reference is made to three

premises, namely, 35, Kankulia Road, 26/1A, 26/1B, Grey Street, and 16 Shampooker Street.

In the printed circular referred to above criticism has been made of the working of the Building Department of the Calcutta Corporation, and the appointment of a Special Officer for this Department has been urged. Before taking any action on these papers, the Hon'ble Minister wishes to be assured that the circular has in fact been issued by you in your capacity as the Secretary of the North Calcutta Congress Committee, and as your signature is in print, and not in your own hand, I am desired to verify it by a direct reference from you. Would you kindly let me have information on the above points as soon as possible."

To SUDHIR KUMAR GHOSH, Esq.,

*Secretary, North Calcutta Congress Committee.*

Now the reply given to this letter is this. This letter is dated the 17th/18th January, 1938, North Calcutta Congress Committee.

"Dear Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your demi-official letter No. 168M. of the 14th instant, and note that you desire me to confirm my signature in the printed circular letter in the capacity of the Secretary, North Calcutta Congress Committee, which I hereby confirm. I wonder as to who might have referred the matter to you, and would like to inform you that this has been done at the sender's own initiative and responsibility without my knowledge and consent—."

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Hear, hear.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** There are other matters also.

"The circular referred to was circulated under instruction from our District Congress Sub-Committee, and the queries were sent along with my letter, dated the 8th November, 1937, addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, Corporation of Calcutta. As I cannot understand how these papers found their way to the Hon'ble Minister, Department of Public Health and Local Self-Government, I shall thank you to enlighten me kindly in the matter."

"In this connection I may mention that no reply to the queries referred to abovt has yet been received from the Calcutta Corporation."

**(Hear, hear, from the Coalition Benches.)**

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that under the Calcutta Municipal Amendment Act even in spite of posting surgeons and in spite of paying Rs. 9,000 to a particular surgeon, unauthorised instruction was made—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when this question was received in his Administrative Department, and when was it received with the reply?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** That is more than what I can tell off hand; if the hon'ble member puts a question I shall reply.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is it a fact that this question was received and replied to quite contrary to the ordinary practice of replying in course of time, at a very early date for some special reasons?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It is for the Legislative Assembly Department to send questions to the Administrative Department, and the Administrative Department always tries to expedite answer to questions as soon as practicable.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** The enthusiasm of the Secretary to enquire into the matter is really wonderful. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give an assurance—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is not a question.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that some high Government officials have been held by the Municipal Magistrate of Calcutta guilty of gross violation—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give us an assurance that the same enthusiasm will be shown by the Secretary in future cases of enquiry too?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

**(answers to which were laid on the table)**

*** Debt Settlement Boards in certain police-stations of Noakhali.**

**69. Mr. SHAH SYED GOLAM SARWAR HOSAINI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department aware that there is no Debt Settlement Board under the police-stations Hatia, Sandwip and Ramgati?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the majority of members of the Debt Settlement Boards in Noakhali are *talukdars* and *mahajans*?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of a feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the debtors of the Noakhali district over the matter of settlement by these Boards?

**MINISTER in chargt of CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT and RURAL INDEBTEDNESS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary Mullick):** (*a*) This is not correct.

(*b*) and (*c*) No.

**Malaria in the Dhamrai and Saturia police-stations, Dacca.**

**70. Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that people of Dhamrai and Saturia police-stations in the district of Dacca have suffered this year from an attack of malaria?

(*b*) Have Government investigated into the causes of the outbreak?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that there were prolonged suffering and repeated attacks; and

(*ii*) that the supply of quinine was not adequate?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing separately—

(*i*) total number of population; and

(*ii*) number of attacks and deaths from malaria this year in these two Unions, viz., Suapur and Rowile?

(*e*) What steps do the Government propose taking to prevent and to control the spread of malaria in this area?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The causes of the outbreak are under investigation. A comprehensive malaria survey by officers deputed by the Bengal Public

Health Department is at present being carried out in Dhamrai police-station.

(*c*) (*i*) No.

(*ii*) No. The supply was adequate.

(*d*) A statement is laid on the table. The number of attacks from malaria is not available.

(*e*) Steps for control of malaria will be decided upon as soon as the results of the investigations are available.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (d) of unstarred question No. 70, showing number of population and attacks and deaths from malaria in Rowile and Suapur.*

| | Population. | Attacks. | Deaths from malaria up to December, 1937. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rowile .. | 8,325 | Not known | 107 |
| Suapur .. | 11,652 | Do. | 723 |

**Water-supply scheme and tube-well in Bogra.**

**71. Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Municipal Commissioners of Bogra have applied for sanction to a loan for the water-supply scheme in the Municipality?

(*b*) If so, what action have the Government taken or propose taking in the matter?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that the water from ordinary tube-wells, including that of the District Magistrate's bungalow, was found by the Public Analyst of Rangpur to contain faecal germs and reported by him to be unfit for human consumption; and

(*ii*) that the tube-well sunk by Government at a cost of about Rs. 18,000 is not in use at present?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The matter is under the consideration of Government.

(*c*) (*i*) Four samples of tube-well water including one from District Magistrate's bungalow was found to be unsafe for human consumption.

(*ii*) Yes; the actual cost of the tube-well was Rs. 12,802.

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** In view of the answer to (*c*) (*i*) that the water was unsafe for human consumption, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps does the Government propose to take in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I will look into the matter.

### Tube-wells in Noakhali.

**72. Mr. SHAH SYED GOLAM SARWAR HOSAINI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the total number of tube-wells constructed in the district of Noakhali with the money allotted for the purpose by the India Government after the departure of Mr. R. A. Dutch, I.C.S., till now;

(*b*) the depth of each tube-well and the cost incurred for the construction of each tube-well;

(*c*) the number of contractors engaged for the purpose along with their respective names and native districts;

(*d*) the reason for engaging Hindu contractors of other districts in preference to local Muslim contractor; and

(*e*) the name of the officer who inspected the works of the tube-wells?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) 119.

(*b*) A statement containing the information as far as available is laid on the Library table.

(*c*) Babu Harendra K. Mazumdar belonging to Noakhali.

Babu Ramani Mohan De belonging to Noakhali

Babu Rai Mohan Das, Branch Manager, on behalf of Luxmi Narayan Tube-well Co., belonging to Dacca.

(*d*) Only one of the contractors belongs to a district other than Noakhali. All these contractors have got business in Noakhali. Only these three contractors filed by the prescribed date sealed tenders with the required deposit money while the other contractors, of whom two were Muhammadans, did not furnish the deposit money.

(*e*) Babu Kali Brahma Mukharji, District Engineer, with the assistance of the District Board Overseers checked the works.

**Proposed motion for Adjournment.**

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, under rule 106 of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Rules and Standing Orders, I beg leave to move a motion for adjournment of the business of the House.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Why did you not give notice yesterday?

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I could not seize the earliest oportunity of placing this matter before the House and asking for its leave.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But usually you are very prompt in these matters! (Laughter.)

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Unfortunately, the letter (*sic.*) was delivered at my residence at 1 o'clock when I was away in my office. I received it on return to my house.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If you renew your request on Monday next, I shall consider the matter. For technical difficulties I cannot allow it to be taken up to-day.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Then, I take it, Sir, that I shall be allowed to move it on Monday next.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will consider the matter on Monday. In the meantime I would request the Hon'ble Home Minister to furnish me with the necessary information about the text of the motion.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "XVII—Irrigation, etc."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 34,11,500 be granted for expenditure under heads "XVII—Irrigation—Working Expenses—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues—18(1)—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Famine Relief Fund—19—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works—B—Financed from Ordinary Revenues and 68—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage works not charged to Revenues."

Sir, in presenting this budget on the last occasion I spent some time in explaining the causes of the increase and decrease in the various items of expenditure. I do not propose to do so on this occasion, as the time at my disposal is short and can be more usefully spent if I devote it to a statement of my policy and of the work that has been and will be undertaken to implement that policy.

The subject of irrigation comprises four items, viz., irrigation proper, drainage, embankments, and navigation. As regards embankments, my policy is to abandon the existing ones gradually as far as is consistent with public safety. Sir, these embankments are the curse of Central Bengal, and experts are of opinion that they constitute one of the main reasons for the decadence of this area, and they have been rightly described as "Satanic chains" by Sir William Wilcocks. In the first place, these embankments interfere with the natural process of the raising of the deltaic area of the province by means of flood-spill. Secondly, they prevent flushing which is vitally necessary in low-lying areas for destroying malarial larvæ and for improving the fertility of the soil. Lastly, a very serious situation is developing as a result of the attempt to confine the floods within the narrow river-channels by means of earthen embankments. The beds of the rivers are rising gradually, necessitating higher and higher embankments to prevent overtopping by floods. In some places on the Damodar, the river bed is more than 20 feet higher than the country level—

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** 20 feet higher?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Yes. And the consequences can be easily imagined if the embankment is breached and a wall of water more than 20 feet high rushes over the countryside with terrific velocity.

I am well aware of the suffering caused to large numbers of people living in this area on the left bank of the river which is not continuously protected by embankments. It is my intention to take steps in the near future to tackle this problem. A survey of the area is in progress, and when it is completed it should be possible to devise means by which the flooding and water-logging can be minimised. As a temporary measure, some weirs will be constructed before the rainy season across the mouths of creeks which lead the waters of the Damodar to the countryside even in times of normal flood. The Goomti embankment is another case in point and my attention has been repeatedly drawn to the havoc caused by breaches in the embankment. It is not possible, for reasons which I have stated before, to embank the Goomti on both sides, but the Engineers of the department are at present engaged in preparing a scheme for the construction of escapes for the flood water of this river.

I shall now deal with the subject of navigation. It is not necessary for me to dwell at length on the imperative need of East Bengal for the conservation of waterways. In the first place, it is necessary to keep a navigable route open between East Bengal and the Port of Calcutta so that the growers of jute and other commodities may get the proper price for their produce. Any increase in the cost of transport of jute to Calcutta would mean a corresponding decrease in the price which the cultivator would get. In the second place, navigable channels are of utmost importance to the inhabitants of East Bengal for facilities of communication and for enabling the agriculturists to bring their produce to the markets. It will not be too much to say that the waterways in East Bengal stand in the same position as railways and roads in other parts of Bengal.

As the House is aware, these vital waterways are getting gradually silted up and are not receiving the attention which they need. The courses of currents have to be kept under systematic observation, dredging at regular intervals is necessary, and well-thought-out plans have to be prepared and executed. The Bengal Waterways Act was passed by the previous Council with the definite object of putting the entire control and maintenance of the waterways in a statutory body. Its financial scheme has been conceived with the best of motives, and when it is put into operation the benefits derived will more than outweigh hardships, if any.

I now come to the most important activity of this department, which has been more or less neglected in the past owing to financial stringency.

Large areas in Central Bengal have become decadent owing to the diminishing fertility of the soil and the ravages of malaria. If these areas are to be saved from gradual decay and ultimate desolation, they must, in the opinion of experts like Sir William Wilcocks, be flushed and irrigated with the silt-laden waters of the big rivers. We have three such schemes under preparation, viz., the Hooghly-Howrah Flushing Scheme, the More project, and the Darakeswar Scheme. I am glad to be able to state that the preparation of the Hooghly-Howrah Flushing Scheme is nearing completion and that detailed plans and estimates will be ready in a few months. This scheme will take the waters of the Damodar over about 350 square miles of land in the districts of Burdwan, Hooghly, and Howrah and will improve the condition of the dying rivers like the Kunti, Saraswati, Kana Damodar, etc. The More project is intended to introduce a comprehensive irrigation scheme which will irrigate about 700 square miles of land, mainly in the district of Birbhum. It is proposed to construct a reservoir at Mossanjore across the river More while it runs through the hills for irrigating the area commanded by the lower reaches of the river. The Darakeswar Scheme aims at flushing and irrigating a large trace of land, mainly in the district of Bankura. The first two schemes, viz., the Hooghly-Howrah and

the Mora, will cost about 5 crores of rupees. If they are to be taken up, it is imperative that the annual capital and maintenance charges, which will amount to about Rs. 38 lakhs per annum, should be met by the benefited persons. A heavy burden of this magnitude cannot be placed on the provincial revenues as a permanent charge, nor will it be fair and equitable to devote such a large part of the revenues of the province to the improvement of small areas of the province. I do not propose to dwell on the financial aspects of the proposal at present. They will be placed before the House under the provisions of the Bengal Development Act, and the House will then have a full opportunity of discussing in detail the financial and other aspects of the scheme.

Sir, these big projects will take a little time to mature. During the coming year, I intend to take up the resuscitation of the Bhairab and some other connected rivers in Central Bengal. This area, which was once highly fertile and prosperous, is now in the grips of disease and poverty on account of the gradual decay of the channels which carried the silt-laden waters of the Ganges across it. The Engineers of the department are satisfied about the general feasibility of a scheme to revive wholly or partially some of the dying rivers and are engaged in preparing a project in detail, the work on which will be started in the coming cold weather. Apart from this big scheme, I intend to take up in the coming year a number of minor works of public benefit. Four such schemes have been mentioned in the budget. Besides these, a number of other schemes will be selected and taken up. These schemes cannot be specified now and I have been obliged to ask for a lump sum provision. The reason is that the schemes in the archives of the department were in many cases prepared long ago and have to be re-examined in the light of the existing conditions. Sir, it will be observed that the lump sum provision includes expenditure on investigations and contour surveys. I shall now proceed to outline what I have done and propose to do in these directions. Shortly after assuming office, I felt the need for a comprehensive list of the irrigation needs in each district. The schemes in the archives of the department were like a few pieces of a big jig-saw puzzle which did not fit in together and present a clear picture of the needs of the people. Moreover, some parts of Bengal had received little or no attention from Irrigation officers. On account of financial stringency very few new works of public benefit could be undertaken; the staff was cut down to a minimum and was barely sufficient for the maintenance of the existing works. The whole of North Bengal forms only one subdivision in charge of an Assistant Engineer. One Executive Engineer at Khulna is in charge of 11 districts. No wonder that very little is known to Government of the irrigation needs in Northern and Eastern Bengal. I would appeal to the House to give me more men; without the requisite staff it would be impossible to expand the activities of this department. I

accordingly asked the Commissioners of Divisions to compile and furnish me with a comprehensive list of the irrigation needs in each district arranged in order of priority after consultation with local bodies. These schemes have been received from most of the Commissioners and will be examined by a special officer from the engineering and other points of view.

Another work which I propose to start in the coming year is a contour survey of the spill area of the Ganges on the east of Jalangi. It is high time that something should be done to flush these decadent rivers and tracts of land; and a contour survey is essentially necessary for the preparation of flushing schemes.

After the discussion I had with some eminent scientists who assembled in Calcutta during the last session of the Science Congress, I am personally convinced that, without a river-training laboratory in the province, it will be futile to hope to get results of lasting benefit. I am making further investigation into this and particularly the cost which it is likely to involve.

Sir, in concluding my remarks I would ask the House to bear in mind that irrigation schemes cannot be prepared and executed in a short space of time. Careful and prolonged investigations have to be made for the preparation of a scheme, while the execution is delayed by the shortness of the working season, a factor which I would appeal to the House to realise. Moreover, we have to deal with the mighty natural phenomenon of the shifting courses of rivers down to the sea across flat and low-lying areas. Legend say that the mighly Bhagirath trained the Ganges into her old channel along the river Hooghly. The work of Bhagirath was, however, undone in the 15th or 16th century when the Ganges suddenly decided to shift her main course towards the east and to join the Brahmaputra and the Meghna. In consequence West Bengal is heading towards desolation while water-logging and erosion are rife in East Bengal. The Teesta in the North similarly deserted her old course and ceased to feed the streams in North Bengal. It is now for us to attempt to undo to the best of our ability the evil effects of these acts of nature which have been aggravated by the acts of man in setting up embankments and other obstacles in the way of nature spill. The task ahead of us is very big indeed and I ask the House, through you, Sir, for their earnest and wholehearted co-operation in tackling the various problems.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I propose to close this debate at about 12-30; but as this subject is of very great importance and as I find in the agenda paper that at least four important issues have been raised, I will call upon each mover to speak one after another giving the first mover 15 minutes time and for other movers 10 minutes each. I will first call upon Dr. Sanyal to speak: after that I will call upon Mr. Nishitha Nath

Kundu, then one of the groups of Maulvi Azhar Ali and others and then Maharajkumar Uday Chand Mahtab.

In view of my ruling that I gave yesterday, so far as the Opposition is concerned, they are free to press any motion to a division if they so choose; but so far as the allied groups of Government or Government group are concerned, they can move cut motions to draw attention to or to get statement of Governments policy.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is our group debarred from taking part?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Nisitha Nath Kundu will speak from your group.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** So far as the Ministerial Party is concerned do I understand that they can discuss, take part and initiate discussion, but they cannot press for division?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes, they can move to get an announcement of Government policy and do everything but should press for a division.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I beg to move that the demand under the head "Irrigation" be reduced by Rs. 100 in order to draw attention to the policy and administration of the department and failure to initiate and execute beneficent schemes.

Sir, it requires hardly any argument to demonstrate the urgency of the problem of Irrigation in Bengal and I would in support of my case quote only one sentence from the budget speech of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister, where he said: "In certain parts at least, of Bengal, development of irrigation is a necessity for the very life and sustenance of the people. Central and West Bengal and some districts of North Bengal are the worst sufferers from the lack of irrigation. Expert opinion has pointed out that in most parts of Central and Western Bengal a continuous process of depopulation and deterioration of agriculture has set in."

From north to south, from east to west, in every part of Bengal the problem presents unique features; and although the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has confined his attention to central and western Bengal, the problems of east Bengal are no less acute to-day than the problems of the other parts of Bengal. I submit that the urgency of the problem, as affecting the health, agriculture, the communication and the land formation problems of Bengal, has not been sufficiently appreciated by the department concerned, and when the whole of Bengal has been suffering the department has been silently watching the deterioration; while high officials are drawing fat salaries and signing notes and

papers, the poor villagers are dying in thousands and have been suffering in silence. This state of affairs has been continuing for a number of years and with the ushering in of responsible Government, it is hoped that a broad policy would be initiated and courage would be taken in both hands to save the population of Bengal from utter ruin in no time. I submit, Sir, that the legacy of the past still continues and the budget that has been presented to us to-day does not show any improvement in the situation. The budget evidences the continuance of the old policy of apathy and silence. In the first place, we do not find any new project of improvement save and except through the words of the Hon'ble Minister in charge, which have just now dropped. We do not find any evidence in the budget itself that any big project is under contemplation. We have got only mark-time arrangements and we have evidence at most of only a few small tinkering arrangements of Rs. 8,000 in one district and Rs. 16,000 in another.

There is also the evidence that out of a total expenditure of nearly 38 lakhs of the department only Rs. 4,77,000 are meant for new works and for works in progress and even out of this sum nearly Rs. 1,63,000 is meant for surveys and Rs. 1,35,000 go to building bridges near about Calcutta on navigation canals. I submit that these hardly show that there has been any real appreciation of the requirements of rural Bengal so far as irrigation problems are concerned.

The establishment charges exclusive of special revenue establishment go up to nearly 11·9 lakhs, i.e., nearly 12 lakhs while on new projects we find a meagre sum of about Rs. 4 lakhs and odd only provided for, out of which nearly 1·4 lakhs go for bridges near about Calcutta.

There is of course a provision of a certain sum for surveys, etc., but no good projects benefiting large areas are mentioned. We may have surveys and surveys may give us some good projects, but unless and until the results of the surveys are acted up to, there can be no real benefit to the people. We have just heard from the Hon'ble Minister in charge that certain projects have been drawn up and the detailed estimates have been made as the Hon'ble Minister has stated before us, but where is the provision, where is the fund provided for the same? We pause for an answer. Nothing is provided for. So far as all the areas of Bengal are concerned, many beneficent schemes that have been lying ready for a number of years are being shelved. There are schemes for the improvement of the districts of Nadia and Jessore drawn up not by one engineer but by several district officials engineers and the District Board Chairmen sitting together. These schemes would not cost more than Rs. 2 to 3 lakhs and would simply change the character of Central Bengal as a whole. The schemes include improvement of Mathabhanga, Bhairab, Kopatakkhi, Chitra Naba Ganga. Betna, Kodla, and a number of other rivers down below

the region, and still I do not find that a single rupee has been provided for such beneficent schemes, while the Hon'ble Minister in charge comes forward with promises alone. Is that the way he is going to change the character of Bengal?

So far as the irrigation problem of Bengal in general goes, the problem appears to have three-fold aspects. In the first place the problem in East Bengal is one of river training and control of erosions. There, it is not a question so much of deteriorated and dying rivers, which need flushing. In Central Bengal the problem is one of flushing, and large-scale spill areas have got to be developed for flushing areas which have deteriorated beyond recognition. In West Bengal, i.e., in the districts of Midnapur, Bankura and Birbhum we need storage arrangements. These are particularly the three different types of irrigational problems that we are required to meet, in order that we may solve the difficulties due to faulty distribution of water resources.

The failure of the Government so far has been due to a number of causes. I have carefully gone through the question and I agree with my hon'ble friend the Minister in charge that there is something like utter helplessness in the department so far as the number of expert staff goes. I recognise that the department has been treated shabbily by the old Government Perhaps that was due to an insufficient appreciation of the real problems of irrigation in Bengal. The failure has been due largely to this, and in the second place to the fact that the Government have treated irrigation as a commercial department. The policy of the Government has been that so far as the irrigation projects are concerned they must not only pay their own way including the expenses of the particular irrigation administrative arrangements, but have also to bear a proportionate share of the permanent establishment This is an absurdity. If Irrigation is sufficiently important like the Police and the Jails, there must not be any other consideration introduced for providing money for the administration of this department out of general revenues There is no ground whatever to think, as Mr. Adams Williams pointed out in the past, that the problem of irrigation is merely concerned with the projects of flushing a particular local area. It involves so many different aspects of the life of the people, e.g., public health is improved, communications are improved, agriculture is imporved,—that you cannot allocate any particular portion of the work of the administrative staff to a particular kind of work and then ask them to find out the money from the project itself. This theory of a Commercial Department is standing in the way of many a good project. In the third place there is utter lack of imagination and initiative in the department that has been reduced to a mere checking department. With a meagre number of officers, the staff of the Irrigation Department have got to check the numerous suggestions that come from the District Boards and from various official and non-official

agencies. They have not the time, nor energy, nor experience to initiate a new project. In the fourth place, in addition to what the Hon'ble Minister in charge has pointed out, there is also another difficulty with regard to the staff that should be noted, namely, that as soon as the staff get trained in a particular area and begin to gain experience of that area, that staff have got to be transferred. Because of the meagre number of staff there is constant change in the superior officers leaving new officers in a position of utter helplessness. They cannot cope with the problem immediately, and are not able to gain experience before three or four years, but by that time they are also transferred to some other area. That has been an important difficulty. There are also other difficulties due to want of contour surveys and of detailed facts as mentioned by the Hon'ble Minister. I submit that these are difficulties which necessarily follow from want of adequate number of staff. There has been difficulty for want of scientific study through a series of hydraulic observation and for want of a river physics laboratory as the Hon'ble Minister has pointed out. There are also certain legal lacuna, certain difficulties which stand in the way of beneficent projects being taken up, because, I understand, that in spite of the Agricultural and Sanitary Improvements Act of 1921, and Bengal Development Act, there is no protection for Government officials in bringing forth new projects of irrigation which may lead to some damage to crops or property. We are not writing on a clean slate as the Hon'ble Minister has shown and that vested interests have grown up from day to day, with the result that unless there is a change in the existing legislation, Government would find themselves in great difficulty in bringing forth beneficent projects even if they desire to do this. There is also the difficulty due to inadequacy of the grant. That is obvious. In a country where crores and crores of rupees would be required we provide for only Rs. 4 or 5 lakhs for new irrigation projects. With this small sum we will never achieve the desired result.

The problem of irrigation is vast and intricate. I have been trying to study the same for the last six months—both the theoretical aspect of the question as well as practical. I find that natural causes and human interference are equally responsible for the deterioration of the rivers of Bengal. The natural causes are due to the changing courses of our rivers and the silt-bearing nature of the rivers in the alluvial parts of lower and East Bengal. The problem of silt is a most baffling problem. It has been not only baffling the agricultural and irrigation experts in this part of India but has been baffling the experts of all parts of the World. The quantity of silt carried by the rivers of Bengal is something collosal, and most of the ills in our irrigation problem are due to this. On the top of that human interference in the shape of embankments, bridges, roads and railways has

created havoc in the free flow of water. As a result land formation has been prevented and the problems of drainage and Irrigation are becoming more and more acute.

The rivers of Bengal can be broadly classified under three groups. The first comprises those which come from the Himalayan region and form the primary delta-builders. Under this group come the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, the Teesta and the Meghna, and these are the big rivers of Northern and Eastern Bengal. Under the second group come the Damodar, Ajay, More, Cossye and Rupnarayan rivers that originate from the lower hills of the Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas areas and under the third group come the tidal rivers of lower Bengal.

I will not detain you long in going into the details about the characteristics of each group. I will refer to an interesting paper read by one of the irrigation engineers of Bengal, Mr. S. C. Majumdar in the last Science Congress. In that paper you will get a useful and interesting study of the entire problem of rivers of Bengal which requires a very careful examination.

I submit that the irrigation of Bengal requires now very bold measures based upon careful study and examination of numerous factors. There are some misconceptions in the public mind in regard to improvement of waterways. These misconceptions have got to be removed. For example, the idea of the usefulness of embankments, dredging operations and cuts of river mouths. These are old and exploded theories. Now, we have got more scientifically investigated data and knowledge born out of them. In order to improve our rivers we must see that spill areas are extended and more water is drawn from the sources and upper reaches of fresh water rivers. Large spill areas must be allowed to form and raise the level of lands. That is the only way to improve the rivers, and there is no other way to improve them. People should be educated in this and their agricultural and other operations should be so modified as to permit this remedy to be freely applied.

I request Government and urge upon them that they do take up a bold policy and try to execute that policy into action by taking this House into its confidence at every step, and I am sure the House will give them every possible facility, every possible help, and every possible financial supply. Mere tinkering projects with a small scheme here and there will not do. I want the Hon'ble Minister to remember in this connection one thing, that, unless he adopts schemes providing simultaneous approach over a comparatively large area no real and permanent benefit can be done. I can give you one example so far as Central Bengal is concerned. I find that there is a wonderful hydro-dynamic balancing or equilibrium created with all the river systems that emanate from the Ganges,—from the Bhagirathi on the one side

to the Gorai on the other. There is a chain of rivers that has got a system of waterways balancing itself on the North and on the South. Unless you take the whole area simultaneously, and if you only draw the water at one end, then the rivers of other areas may suffer. Therefore, I submit that there must be a sufficiently comprehensive scheme, otherwise no real and permanent benefit can be done. I also submit that the Government should create a machinery for scientific study; they should create a machinery for a hydro-dynamic research laboratory; they should create a machinery to tackle and initiate development projects and to execute sanctioned projects expeditiously and efficiently, and I implore the House, as well as the Government to realise that unless this is done no permanent good to the country can be achieved.

The Department of Co-operative, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Communications are all vitally interested in the problems connected with irrigation. I appeal to all of them to shake off their departmental compartmentalism and join hands together, for unless that is done, no permanent benefit to the country can ever be achieved. Unfortunately, Sir, Irrigation in the last few years before the inauguration of the Reforms was a Reserved subject, and those who were in charge of this Department were not sufficiently appreciative of the cry in the wilderness of the villagers, who were content to ask merely for small projects here and there, and could not go further. The experts of the Government, Sir, know more about these things than the villagers. They know that the country demands comprehensive schemes and a bold policy for the whole of the area. This is the only way in which these problems can be tackled. I have got a number of projects referred to me and I can hand them over to the Hon'ble Minister if he so desires. In the Dacca district there are the following schemes:—

Tulsi Khali khal, Ichamati river, Dhaleswari river, Dolaikhal project, and Karnapara khal.

There are similar schemes almost for every district of Bengal.

I have projects for Contai and Tamluk, specially the Kalighai project for Contai; I have also got other projects which are ready and lying in the department almost complete, viz., the storage projects for Bankura, and the Reservoir Project for Birbhum, a flushing scheme for South Midnapore, river flushing projects for Jessore and Nadia; important schemes for the tidal river in the 24-Parganas and Khulna, as well as several other schemes for flushing the waterlogged areas of Murshidabad and North Bengal. I have also made some enquiries regarding flood-flushing schemes for Pabna and Rajshahi with the help of the local District Engineers.

I submit that if these projects are taken up with courage and if non-official agencies are given sufficient initiative in this matter, and taken

into confidence, then much of the improvement can be effected by non-official agencies at a much cheaper cost. With these words, Sir, I implore that Government should go a new way to solve the Irrigation problems of Bengal. I must frankly admit that the problems appeared to me at one stage to be quite baffling, and even after the study that I have made of this matter, I come forward with my propositions with some amount of diffidence. For unlike perhaps the stage at which I talked much but could not give my suggestions a concrete shape, I now realise that the problem is a very vast one and requires careful and intensive study. I therefore submit with great humility that if it appears that it is not possible to go through the entire field as proposed by me straightaway, then Government should appoint a River Commission, appoint experts and should make every endeavour to give us what Bengal needs most—good rivers and a proper distribution of the faulty waterways of the country. Then alone should we have achieved the desired improvement of our waterways without which we are all slowly but surely heading towards utter annihilation.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 34,11,500 under the head "XVII—Irrigation" be reduced by Rs. 100. (Policy in taxing tenants getting benefit of these works.)

In moving this cut motion, Sir, I beg to point out that the works and schemes of Irrigation and embankments and drainage, if carried out properly and systematically impart manifold benefits to the people. I have seen the elaborate canal system in the Punjab which has worked wonders by converting sandy areas into the most productive and the best cultivable fields with the result that the people there are very happy and prosperous now. We can brighten up the agricultural prospects, better the economic condition, get rid of flood and famine and avoid their frequent recurrences, drive out malaria and improve the sanitary conditions, all round, and also improve the waterways and thereby help the village trade and commerce to grow by introducing a net work of wide and elaborate irrigational schemes throughout the entire province. The gravity and importance of this question have assumed a most serious character with the silting up of the river beds and with the increase in the number of the dead and dying rivers in a province abounding in rivers. Thirty-seven years ago an Indian Famine Commission recommended the adoption of irrigational work for development of agriculture and agricultural processes and as a protective measure against famine. But, Sir, Government have not yet attached to this question the importance that it deserves. We have heard with rapt attention the Hon'ble Minister for Communication and Works but the schemes are quite inadequate to cope with the vast need and the vast area of the province as has also been admitted by the Hon'ble Minister himself. The necessity of working

out elaborate schemes of irrigation is such that delay means denial of relief and economic and sanitary destruction of the province. All works may wait, but these cannot. The total amount allotted under this head this year, *i.e.*, under heads 17, 18, 18 (*I*), 19 and 68, is Rs. 37, 97, 500. It includes working expenses, cost of establishment, plant and tools, leave salaries and deputation pay and sterling overseas pay. So if these are deducted, only Rs. 14,54,920 remain for the actual irrigational works and schemes. We have, therefore, allotted barely about 1 per cent. of the total revenue as against 17·3 per cent. for police. This is how the popular Government is tackling the problem that concerns the health, happiness and prosperity of the people. Their negligence in this direction may be called criminal; so please find money and there will be no dearth of schemes and projects. When, however, money is demanded for such purposes the Government either refuse it or go for taxation. The piecemeal irrigational works and the minor schemes that have been taken up by the Government, though not proved beneficial or up to the mark, have been a further source of taxation to those already overtaxed. I learn on enquiry that about 48 inches of water are required for paddy, beginning from the stage of plantation to the end of harvesting. The present irrigational arrangement of the Government can deliver five courses of supply, each lasting for 10 days, within the period between the middle of June to the end of October. They supply only about 22½ inches of water in place of 48 inches. Still for Damodar canal service they are charging Rs. 5-8 per acre, *i.e.*, at least twice the usual rent that a cultivator or tenant has to pay to his superior landlords. This principle of taxing on property basis is not only wrong but really untenable and inequitable. Persons possessing equal quantity of property may not possess an equal tax-paying capacity, for properties of an equal area may be unequally productive and margin of profit may differ considerably in different cases. So the tax-paying capacity must be determined from the surplus or productivity of each parcel of tenancy a man possesses. In taxing a person the Government should also take into consideration that the taxation must also confer on the taxed the usual benefit that is intended for such taxation. Are the tenants getting the desired benefit from the canal service? The non-official enquiry committee, after due enquiry, assert that in conformity with the benefit that is received by the tenants, Rs. 1-8 may be the maximum tax per acre. Government is not justified to realise one pice more before it is proved by facts and figures that the recommendations of the above committee are wrong. We have also to consider whether the tenants in general are able to pay further taxes. For beneficient schemes the people may be liable for taxes, but it is not the liability but the ability to pay that justifies taxation. The tenants of Bengal are heavily indebted. The indebtedness has been such that it necessitated special legislation. They are hopelessly in arrears of

rent. They cannot send their boys to schools and obtain medical relief during illness. Yet, are we to say that the tenants are able to pay taxes? Not to speak of the realisation of additional canal taxes, the realisation of rents at the existing high rates is not also justified unless we can guarantee the requisite productivity of the soil for which alone the rent is charged and is realisable. So until we have been able to change the economic condition of the people, we should not expect any return from works of this nature. I mean the irrigational services should be for a time free, and the policy of taxation changed. Why not realise something from the railway department that is immensely benefited by these irrigational schemes and works? The moral obligation to free the people from their indebtedness is heavily on the Government before the Government propose to levy or realise any tax from the people. The Hon'ble Minister has also admitted that North Bengal is the most neglected part of the province in respect of irrigation. It will not, therefore, be out of place to draw the attention of the Government to the miserable plight of a large number of tenants in thanas Gangarampur, Kushamnandi and Itahar in Dinajpur where a very large area is devastated more than once every year by river water during the rains owing to breaches in embankments resulting in total failure of crops. I personally inspected a portion of about 48 square miles that is flooded every year and acquainted myself with the afflictions the tenants suffer there. Two representations have already been submitted to Government, and I hope Government will please enquire into the matter very soon.

With these observations, I commend my motion for the acceptance of the House.

**Maulvi AZHAR ALI:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 34,11,500 under the head "Irrigation" be reduced by Rs. 100 and in doing so I propose to discuss the policy of irrigation as well as the immediate necessity of resuscitating the dead and dying rivers in some parts of Bengal.

First of all, with regard to the irrigation policy, I should say that the present as well as the past Government of Bengal have practically had no policy. In my opinion, the Irrigation Department was most probably following the policy which was in vogue in the United Provinces and the Punjab. By irrigation we the people of Bengal are generally given to understand that it is a department for storing of water and cutting canals for the improvement of the surrounding lands as was done in some parts of Western Bengal. But the Irrigation Act itself shows that the work of storing and supplying water is not the only work of the department. The Department of Irrigation should also think of embankments, drainage and of flushing and flooding the country where necessary and of better communication and such

other things. But we see that the Government have been persistently neglecting this very important function of the department. So far as North Bengal is concerned, the Hon'ble Minister in his speech has given us much hope that Government would look to the condition of North Bengal as well as East Bengal. This thing we have been hearing, Sir, from long, long ago, but the condition of the rivers in North Bengal and East Bengal have become such that certain parts of the province are going to be depopulated for want of proper flushing and in consequence of that, by malaria and other diseases. That this is a fact has no doubt been realised by Government. As regards the Rajshahi Division, representations have been made by the districts of Rajshahi, Bogra, Dinajpur, Rangpur and Pabna to Government for resuscitating the rivers Karatoa, Ichhamati, Boral, etc., and also other rivers which are fed by them. Dredging and resuscitating of these rivers is very important not only for better communication and flushing of the areas, but also from the point of view that these rivers are generally fed by the waters of the large *bils*. In North and East Bengal there are vast *bil* areas, the waters of which never come out owing to the silting up of the adjacent rivers, and the tributaries which carry the waters of these *bils* into the larger rivers cannot carry the waters now, on account of a rise in the depth of those rivers. If Government had paid a little bit of attention to this, it would have been possible for the natural or artificial canals to carry the waters of the *bil* areas as well as flood water to the bigger rivers and thereby to improve the sanitary condition of those areas and eradicate malaria and other diseases. But Government have done nothing up till now. In my own district of Pabna, the District Board has approached Government several times for the construction of some embankments and sluice gates as well as for clearing up the silts of some rivers. Similar representations have also been made by the District Boards of Rajshahi and Bogra for rescusitating the Karatoa and other rivers, but Government have practically been doing nothing. Then, Sir, the railway department have been constructing bridges and culverts, practically obstructing the passage of water as also flooding and flushing. Oftentimes it is found during heavy floods that bridges and railway embankments given way causing immense suffering to the people. It sometimes happens that, as a matter of fact, there can be no other alternative for those people but to cut the railway embankment to save themselves. In spite of repeated representations made to the Government, the Railway Department have taken no care to widen the spans of the culverts below the railway lines which obstruct the water passage and give innumerable troubles to the inhabitants of the areas. There were some proposals from the District Board of Pabna for the sluice gates in some natural canals which supply water to the vast *bil* areas. One is the river Chiknai and the other is river Badai. These two rivers

are the natural canals supplying water to the vast *bil* areas. But Government is taking not only no care to save these areas, but practically is obstructing the way in this way that the Railway Department often raise objections if all these areas fall within the area of the Hardinge Bridge, and we do not know what technicality lies there that though the Hardinge Bridge is about 50 or 60 miles away on the river from the canals, and how this Hardinge Bridge will be affected if these *bunds* are constructed, and if these natural canals are flushed. Even if the local people try to do any substantial work, they are generally obstructed. In Rajshahi Division the river Baral comes from the district of Rajshahi from near Boraigram thana or some place like that. The people of that and Chatmohar thana jointly tried to clear that river and they proceeded to some extent two or three years before, and by doing that they were to some extent successful in clearing that river, and the people of that area gained much, but subsequently they were obstructed by this Railway Department, and the representations before the Government were of no avail.

The river Ichamati near Pabna is practically encroached by private owners. During the time of Rai Bahadur S. C. Basu, District Magistrate, efforts were made to remove those obstacles through the Irrigation Department, but the Government paid no heed to it. This river Ichamati flows from one end of the district to the other. The course is about 42 miles, and owing to the silting up of this river at the very source, the whole district is going to be depopulated as well as other areas which lie along the banks of the other branch channels issuing from this river Ichamati. Since the time of Sir Andrew Fraser the people of Pabna put up their grievances before the Government, and addresses were presented, but false hopes were given that due action will be taken when funds are available.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Maharajkumar UDAY CHAND MAHTAB:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not wish to move the cut motion which stands in my name, but I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my views on the question of resuscitation of waterways and embankments.

Sir, Bengal is a province which in its natural formation is different from other parts of India, and as such requires special treatment. The greater part of Bengal is flat and deltaic, with meandering water channels, some large and some small. These channels very often shift their courses and sometimes become silted up leading to obstruction of drainage and navigation. The abandoned beds are very often left as stagnant pools of water which is the cause of malaria throughout the province.

In Western Bengal we have some rivers like the Damodar and Ajay coming down from the uplands of Chota-Nagpur and bringing down a very large volume of water during the rains. If the rainfall is heavy, it leads occasionally to devastating floods destroying crops in the fields and habitations of men in the affected areas. Similarly North Bengal is also liable to floods. In eastern Bengal the flooding of beels and the shifting of streams are normal and annual occurrences.

Sir, our irrigation system, if we have any, has been formulated with very little foresight. We have in certain areas indiscriminately thrown up embankments to protect them from floods which has resulted in the gradual raising of the beds of rivers by deposits of silt and sand so that in some places the river bed has become higher than the surrounding country.

Railway embankments, have been built without due consideration of the needs of surface drainage and proper outlets at a time of heavy rains.

In view of the physical characteristics of our province, it is necessary that there should be a thorough examination of the requirements of the different parts, namely, North Bengal, West Bengal, East Bengal and the Sea Board.

The most important factors in North and West Bengal are the canalisation of the existing rivers and channels, the storage and distrition of monsoon floods, the resuscitation of dying channels, the drainage of water-logged areas, the romoval of embankments and the multiplication of culverts.

In East Bengal the dredging of channels and streams that are silted up, the training of courses of stream where they are likely to affect valuable sites, the draining of beels and conversion of them into arable lands, the keeping open and opening of economical routes of water transport should receive special attention.

Sir, the Sea Board of Bengal is low and in many places covered with jungles. It is cut up by creeks, estuaries and deltaic streams, and is subject to high flow tides and to occasional tidal waves which blot out all trace of human life and endeavour. The population of these areas are rather thin. But no attempt appears to have been made towards a careful study of the difficulties of this area.

Sir, the difficulty with irrigation has been treated with a narrow outlook. Problems have been treated as purely local and no comprehensive scheme has been thought out or adopted. It is true that irrigation schemes are expensive and Government funds for such schemes are limited. Hence, great care should be taken to find out as to whether the works to be undertaken are productive or not. In Bengal, calculations have in the past gone wrong, a very good example of which is the Damodar Canal in the Burdwan Division. The benefit that was estimated was found in most cases to have been based on a

lavish calculation. The charges on the tax-payers of the localities concerned have been heavy and have led to widespread protests against the rates imposed.

I am glad, Sir, to take this opportunity to thank the Government for having taken note of the grievances and having attempted to reduce the rates. In my speech last year I suggested that a local enquiry should be made and the report of the Damodar Canal Enquiry Committee was signed by the members and submitted to Government on the 9th February, 1938. I understand that it is still under the consideration of the Cabinet, and I would appeal to the Chief Minister to go through the matter as soon as possible and to announce their decision at an early date.

Sir, some people think that those who receive benefit from the canal should be made to pay, and as such suggestions have been made that the railways and the municipalities should also be asked to contribute and the whole charge should not be levied from the poor inhabitants of the area. This, also, I would ask the present Government to consider.

Sir, at one time, I understand, it was the idea of the Government to impose a levy on the canal area so that it would not only recoup the expenditure incurred in the construction of the canal, but that the extra money realised would be used for further canalisation of the province. This is entirely unjust, because such projects should come out of the finances of the province and levies should be imposed only on the extra yield that the inhabitants are likely to get. I hope that the present Government in future projects of this nature will not be a party to such ideas.

Sir, I, therefore, urge the consideration of the following suggestions:—

(*a*) The needs of the different parts of the Province should be carefully examined, and schemes should be prepared for general improvement of a fairly permanent character.

(*b*) The works should, as far as possible, be paid for by the revenues of the province.

(*c*) Productive works should first be taken in hand, if necessary, out of public loans.

(*d*) The profits from works which yield profit should, after providing for recoupment of loans, if any, be available for other work which, though necessary, may not yield profit.

(*e*) The Province should be interspersed with a network of canals and waterways, kept open by dredging and training, with sufficient protection against the monsoons and with proper arrangement for drainage and for the raising of low-lying areas.

Sir, I am sorry for having taken up so much time of the House; but I hope that if these suggestions are taken up with enthusiasm and after due examination of facts, I am sure we shall be able to make Bengal a brighter and more prosperous province and provide work for a large part of her growing population. I must say, Sir, that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister deserves congratulations for certain aspects of the budget he has placed before this House, and I hope that he will be able to do still better next year.

(Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali rose to speak.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I propose to close the debate on "Irrigation" at 12-30, and then take up "Civil Works." I am going to reserve 10 minutes for the Hon'ble Minister to reply. My difficulty has been increased by the request of two members who want to make their maiden speeches. I am afraid, Khan Bahadur, that if I were to allow you to speak the number of speakers will mount up to four. I will now call upon Maulvi Aminullah to speak.

**Mr. ABDUL WAHAB KHAN:** Sir, may I be allowed to speak? I shall take only five minutes.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am sorry there is no time.

**Maulvi AMINULLAH:** মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়,

বাংলা সরকারের পূর্ত্তবিভাগ সম্বন্ধে ২।৪টি কথা বোলবার জোন্য আমি দণ্ডায়মান হয়েছি। গভর্ণমেণ্ট সর্ব্বসাধারণের উন্নতিকল্পে বহুটাকা বাজেটে ধোরেছেন বটে, কিন্তু উপযুক্ত কর্ম্মচারীর দ্বারা তদন্তের অভাবে প্রত্যেক জিলায় ঐ টাকা যথোপযুক্তরূপে ব্যয় হবার সুব্যবস্থা হয় নাই। বাংলার অন্যান্য জিলার বিষয় আমি এই অল্প সময়ের মধ্যে কিছু না বোলে আমার নিজ জিলা নোয়াখালি সম্বন্ধে কিছু বোলছি। নোয়াখালি জেলার বেশীরভাগ জায়গাই নদনদীর অত্যাচারে সবসময়েই সন্ত্রাসিত। অতএব নোয়াখালি জেলার জোন্য গভর্ণমেণ্টের নিম্নলিখিতভাবে পূর্ত্তবিভাগের কার্য্যের বন্দোবস্ত করা উচিত। এবং তদ্রূপ কার্য্য করিলে প্রভূত উপকার হবে:—

(১) নোয়াখালি town এর খালের উপর বাঁধ দিয়ে উত্তর দিকের তিনটি খাল—(ক) লক্ষ্মীপুর খাল, (খ) মহেন্দ্র খাল, (গ) রায়পুর খালের পশ্চোদ্ধার কোরে জল চলাচলের ব্যবস্থা যদি করা হয় তা'হোলে এই জেলা নদীর অত্যাচার হোতে রক্ষা পেতে পারে। এই জেলা রক্ষা হওয়ার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে শুধু যে জনসাধারণই উপকৃত হবে তা নয় সরকার বাহাদুরও যথেষ্ট উপকৃত হবেন। সহরটি রক্ষা হইলে সরকারী ভবনগুলি আশু ধ্বংশের হাত হোতে রক্ষা পেতো। এবং বহু খাসমহল জমিও আর ধ্বংশ হবে না। এই প্রসঙ্গে আর একটি বিশেষ উল্লখযোগ্য কথা বোলতে চাই এই যে, নোয়াখালি জিলার অন্তর্গত বসুরহাট থানার অধীন চরপাবর্তী ইউনিয়নের পূর্ব্ব মাথায় ভাটা খাল ও দোয়ার খাল, এবং উক্ত থানার অধীনে মুছাপুর ও রামপুর ইউনিয়নের ভিতরে বংশালা খাল ও সোনাপাজী থানার অন্তর্গত চরচাঙ্গী ইউনিয়নের উত্তর সীমানার খাল বহুদিন থেকে

জরাট হোয়ে যাওয়ায় জল চলাচলের বিশেষ বাধা হোয়েছে। ফলে ঐসকল খালের পার্শ্ববর্ত্তী নিম্ন জমির ফসল গত ৮।১০ বছর যাবত নষ্ট হয়ে আসছে। তাছাড়া অধিবাসীরাও বিবিধ রোগে আক্রান্ত হোচ্ছে। গরীব কৃষক ও প্রজার ইহার ফলে যেরূপ ক্ষতি হইতেছে তাহা একমাত্র প্রত্যক্ষদর্শী বুঝিতে পারে, সেইজন্য উপরোক্ত খাল ও নদীগুলির সংস্কারের দিকে বিভাগীয় মন্ত্রীমহোদয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি। আশা করি তিনি আমার কথিত বিষয়গুলি note কোরে রাখবেন। আর একটি বিষয়ের প্রতিও তাঁর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ কোর্চ্ছি। খাসমহল চরের বহু জায়গা বাংলা সরকার সেলামী গ্রহণে বন্দোবস্ত দিচ্ছেন। কিন্তু সরকার পক্ষ হ'তে উপযুক্ত কাচি বাঁধের অভাবে উহা প্রত্যেক বছর ভাঙ্গিয়া বন্যার জল গিয়া ফসলাদি নষ্ট করে কৃষককুলের সর্ব্বনাশ সাধন কোর্চ্ছে। আশা করি বিভাগীয়-মন্ত্রীমহোদয় দরিদ্র কৃষক প্রজার এই দুরবস্থার আশু প্রতিকার কোর্ত্তে ভুলবেন না।

(The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I give my unstinted support to the motion so ably moved by my friend.

I shall specially refer to one instance of the Government's failure to execute the beneficient scheme and for that I am quite sure they richly deserve a censure. The ravages of Goomti floods in the district of Tipperah are no less serious and extensive than those of the Damodar floods. The disastrous Goomti floods are not of recent origin. The people of the doomed area have been victims of those floods from the very commencement of the British rule.

I quote the following from one of the Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers:—

"Again in 1784, there were floods and the embankment along the Goomti gave way. In the following cold weather the rabi crop failed and the people were left starving; 1,500 were fed daily by the Resident but he estimated 7,000 people died of the famine and 12,000 had gone away to other parts in search of relief."

The same book gives us an account of the flood caused by breaches in the Goomti Embankment in 1788 and 1794.

In 1883, Mr. D. B. Horn the then Executive Engineer, observed—"Scarcely a year passes without a breach taking place somewhere along the line, when a large tract of country is inundated, the rice crop destroyed, and the lives of the villagers and cattle more or less endangered."

Mr. Webster, the author of the Gazetteer, observes, "At one time the breaches in the Embankment were so frequent and so disastrous that its abandonment was suggested."

In 1906, the embankment was breached in several places and serious damages were caused to crops over large tracts of country.

In answer to the question put by me in the last session of the Assembly, it has been admitted that the breaches have been occurring now as they occurred before causing, considerable damages to crops and cattle.

To crown all, some portion of the northern embankment is not now maintained by the Government or by the Tippera Raj and there have been annual breaches. In fact, the Hon'ble Mr. Green, in answer to questions put by Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta, the then member of the Legislative Council in the year 1917, said that the floods are now to be looked upon as ordinary incidents of the rainy season even in years of normal rainfall.

So we find that the ravages of the Goomti flood have gone on unchecked and unmitigated for about a hundred and fifty years. But the question remains, is the problem capable of solution? We have been told that according to the expert opinion it is quite possible to control the floods and the evils arising from the Goomti are not without remedy.

In 1889, Mr. D. B. Horn, the then Executive Engineer remarked "The only solution of the difficulty then is to escape the flood water above Comilla so as to reduce the flood level in the lower reach to the limit of safety."

In 1910, Mr. C. A. White, the then Superintending Engineer says, "The universal proposal has been to construct an "escape" with right embankments to relieve the pressure on the left embankments. This proposal has so far not been carried out on account of the expense." He further observed, "The question of 'escape' need not be considered because of the initial cost of the escapes and of the necessary channels."

The Hon'ble Mr. Green told the then Council in the year 1917 that the scheme of escape channels first came under the consideration of the Government in 1884, and we were told in the last session of the Assembly in the year 1937, fifty-three years after that the construction of an escape on the Goomti Bank with the object of disposing of a portion of the flood and giving some relief to the area affected, is still under consideration.

It is, however, a fact that in a note dated the 6th November, 1885, Mr. J. C. Vertannes, the then Superintending Engineer estimated that the expense would be roughly one to two lakhs of rupees. Was it fair to the ryots to sacrifice crops of lakhs and lakhs only to put off a scheme which would cost no more than one or two lakhs. Now we are told that we live under the popular Government. The present Ministry are said to be the real trustees and benefactors of the people. The present Government find money to construct a palace for the Legislative Council at the expense of sixteen lakhs and to construct a Purdah College at the expense of Rs. 5½ lakhs, but they do not find

money to execute a scheme with a view to avoid a devastating flood in rural Bengal.

Before I sit down I beg to draw the attention of the Government to the following points, namely, that an area of 10 miles from Naldi to Lohagara of the river Nabaganga in the district of Jessore is being silted up and if it is not prevented, an area of about 40 miles from Naldi to Bardia will be silted up with disastrous consequences.

In this connection, I would also draw the attention of the Government to the report of the Congress Enquiry Committee regarding the Damodar Canal, and I submit that Government will find it possible to accept the recommendations of the Congress Enquiry Committee regarding the Damodar Canal. Under the present system of leasing out land at the rate of Rs. 4-8 per acre, in the Eden Canal area, people do not come forward to take lease of lands as the rate is very exorbitant and unless the present rate is reduced people of the locality will not come forward to take lease.

Lastly, I beg to draw attention to one fact, namely, that the excavation of the river Brahmaputra in the district of Mymensingh is very urgently necessary and unless it is done, the whole district will be destroyed in no time.

I also draw attention to the lamentable condition of the river Titas in the district of Tippera, and unless the silting up of the river is stopped, the health and welfare of the people of Brahmanbaria will be jeopardised, as it is the only natural canal of the subdivision.

These are the beneficient schemes which I hope Government would take into their consideration. As a matter of fact, these schemes will not cost more than Rs 1 or 1½ lakhs.

I would also draw the attention of Government to the fact that the river Kakri in the district of Tipperah is causing destruction of crops and cattle of the people of the locality.

With these words, I support the motion of my friend Dr. Sanyal.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi ALFAZUDDIN AHMAD:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support the cut motion of Mr. Azhar Ali and others, to discuss the policy of the Irrigation Department, and in doing so, I intend placing before the House how inactive and apathetic the Irrigation authorities are in the matter of giving relief to the people and specially to the cultivating classes. I shall not deal with the question of adequacy or inadequacy of provision in the irrigation budget, but I wish to give *inter alia* a few instances of their activities which they displayed in our locality.

In the Khasmahal Char below Tamluk in the district of Midnapore, the construction and maintenance of bunds for cultivation purposes were disallowed by the irrigation authorities, in 1937. These Chars

were leased out to tenants by Government without imposing any condition whatsoever regarding the construction of bunds. They accordingly erected bunds and went on cultivating their land for years. The bunds existed from a long time and the irrigation authorities so long overlooked their existence; but in 1937, they, for reasons best known to them, objected to the retention and maintenance of the bunds—though their abolition affected the Government revenue to the extent of nearly Rs. 10,000 a year. We, as laymen have no right to say anything against the demolition of the long existed bunds. The expert opinion will prevail.

The tenants cultivated Rabi crops in these Char lands, as usual, and the crops worth thousands of rupees were in abundant growth. They were to reap their harvest in the course of a month or two; but to their utter misfortune, only the other day, the Sectional Officer Dainan arrived at the Char lands with a number of coolies to cut open the bunds.

The tenants implored earnestly not to cut open the bunds immediately, but to wait a month or two to enbale them to take out the crops. But the Sectional Officer pretended to be a dutiful man and as such he did not move an inch and cut down the bunds at about 100 places in the midst of the wailings of the tenants. Salt water entered into the land through the cuttings and destroyed the crops.

This action of the Irrigation authorities reduced many people to extreme poverty. I understand that the civil Subdivisional Officer did not like this hasty action of the irrigation officers. It is nothing but a cruel and inhuman action on the part of the irrigation officers.

This is the way in which they move. Instead of giving relief to the people, they do not hesitate to put them to trouble. So far for the distress of the char people.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In view of the fact that there are many members eager to speak, they cannot do it unless each member speaks only for 2½ minutes.

**Khan Sahib S. ABDUR RAUF:** Mr. Speaker, Sir. I think it is my duty to speak a few words on this occasion. We all know that Bengal is principally an agricultural country. Her resources very much depend on the proper cultivation of its soil. Nearly 95 per cent. of the population are cultivators and nearly 80 per cent. of the members of this legislature are the representatives of these people. As representatives of these people if we are not able to do anything for them then I think it will be better for all of us not to sit in this legislature but

to vacate our seat for those who will be able to do everything for those people.

Sir, the Department of Irrigation is the most important department so far as the Province of Bengal is concerned. In my opinion this question of irrigation is more important than the question of primary education because on it depends the wealth of the city. If we are not able to improve the resources of our country we will not be able to make profit out of cultivation.

Considering the huge demands which the country requires the sum which is allotted is too meagre for the successful work of irrigation in this country. Sir, in every district of the Province of Bengal a net work of irrigation canals and drainage works are urgently necessary. In the last year's Budget discussion we were given hopes, promises and assurances by the Cabinet and we were told that gradually everything would be done for the country. Sir, it is true that some of these hopes, promises and assurances have been fulfilled by the Government. But comparing with the great need it would be said that little has been done. I am a representative from the district of Howrah from the rural area and I have personal knowledge about its rural conditions. There is a vast area in the Uluberia subdivision within Amta, Uleberia and Shavampur police-stations in the district of Howrah known as Kandua Mat better known as কেঁদোর মাঠ which remains under water for the considerable part of year making cultivation impossible

(At this stage the member having reached the time limit resumed his seat.)

**Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKER:** Though there is a motion standing in my name I do not find any necessity of moving that because my friends have already placed before the House the grievances not only of their own but the grievances of the whole province. I like to avail myself of the opportunity to ventilate my views regarding this department. Though I know that almost all parts of the Province are in need of irrigation more or less, I take up the case of Northern Bengal simply because all along Northern Bengal was not given proper consideration. All along Northern Bengal has been neglected. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister in his Budget speech had the kindness to admit that some of the districts though not all are the worst sufferers from lack of irrigation, but I ask him what has he done for the redress of the grievances of the people of Northern Bengal in his Budget for the current year. I shall not forget here to mention some other small works which have been taken up by the Government in the new budget such as the scheme for drainage of *bils* in the district of Pabna.

**(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)**

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir. In rising to speak on this cut motion of Mr. Azhar Ali I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the urgent and immediate necessity of combating the dying or silting up of the waterways of Bengal. This slow and gradual process of the silting up of the rivers could be checked by Government by systematic dredging and resuscitation at regular intervals. The cost then would not have been so prohibitive as it would now be.

Speaking for Bogra, I might point out that the entire district which is served by the once mighty Karatoya is now sadly neglected owing to the mouth of the lower reach of the river being blocked and the natural flow being diverted into Katakhali. In response to the pressure of public opinion the District Board moved the Government for a 2/3rds grant for resuscitating the mouth of the river. The original scheme of 56 thousand of which Rs. 34,000 was paid by Government has now been found to be insufficient, as the authorities did not include the cost of acquisition of land. The work is being taken up, but this is only tinkering with the solution. The result is problematic. Sporadic small schemes of this nature will not be of much benefit to the province. What is wanted, Sir, is a comprehensive scheme which will improve the entire system of waterways in Bengal.

I admit, Sir, that such nation-building schemes will entail a heavy expenditure from provincial revenues and the Hon'ble Finance Minister has said that they cannot be undertaken without imposition of fresh taxes. I would only point out to him that almost one-third of the arable area of the land of Bengal is uncultivated. The Finance Minister has himself told us of the terrible condition in Central, Western and Northern Bengal. He has also told us of the terrible toll that malaria and other diseases take. How is he going to improve the situation without proper system of drainage and irrigation which go together? I would put it to him that all his fears about the irrigation not being productive are wrong. If agriculture is restored to one——

(At this stage the member having reached the time limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. ABDUL WAHAB KHAN:** Mr. Speaker to be brief I submit, Sir, it is high time that the department should make comprehensive survey for drainage and embankments of this province and particularly of the vast *beel* areas known as Satla, Harta and other *beels* in the district of Bakarganj, which is known as the granary of Bengal. Owing to natural conditions the people of Bakarganj never pressed the Government for irrigation purposes but, Sir, altered circumstances compel us now to press for money for improvement of *beel* area by necessary embankment and drainage. Secondly, Sir, small rivers and

canals which intersect the Bakarganj district have hitherto served fourfold purposes, namely:—(*i*) agriculture, (*ii*) drainage, (*iii*) water-supply and (*iv*) communication. But, Sir, through process of time the two tidal waters meeting at a certain point in almost all these khals, have resulted in the silting up of these very useful waterways. It is high time that the department should tackle this problem of waterways and prepare a comprehensive scheme about the problem of the improvement of *beel* areas in the districts of Bakarganj and Faridpur. Because most of these *beels* are on the border line of Faridpur and Bakarganj. The attention of the department was drawn to the project for excavation of one *Thandabibir khal* which extends over several miles of agricultural lands and which, if excavated, would improve the sanitation and agricultural conditions of the locality but, Sir, the wheels of the Department move very slowly and they creep like snails and are unwilling to take up any useful project seriously. I appeal to the Hon'ble the Chief Minister who is also one of the landlords of the *beel* areas and the Hon'ble Minister for Irrigation to visit the *beel* areas during the next monsoon months and see the miserable condition of things for themselves. (At this stage the speaker reached the time-limit. He asked for one or two minutes more but was not allowed to finish, and persisted in speaking.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If you persist in this attitude, I should have most reluctantly to ask you to withdraw.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** Sir, I am not anxious to take part in this debate. As a matter of fact, generally I am not at all anxious to speak unless I am forced by circumstances to do so. I want to say to the Government and to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Irrigation that Chittagong being on the outskirts of Bengal is not in the possession of the ears of the Government. It has, therefore, been relegated to the cold shade of neglect. In his own speech introducing the demand the Hon'ble Minister has said that there is only one Executive Engineer in Khulna in charge of 11 districts Therefore it is no wonder that no scheme has yet been provided for all districts and specially for my district of Chittagong which requires drainage and protective works for Matamori khal and excavation of Halda and Dhurung khals. The other day I put a question on this matter and the Minister most indifferently answered that he was not aware of the shifting course of the Matamohuri river. I say, Sir, that the Minister did not exert to get materials for a correct reply, for instance, he did not send the question to either the Collector of Chittagong or to the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division, and for that reason he has not been able to supply a correct answer and therefore he says in his answer that he is not aware of the shifting course of this river. I drew his attention to the erosion of the river

and the damage caused by the last flood and my friend Dr. Sanaulla also brought it to the notice of the Chief Minister in the last session requesting that some money might be provided for the flood of Matamohuri river. In spite of this, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Irrigation was pleased to say that he was not aware of the shifting course of the Matamari khal. It is therefore high time that drainage and protective schemes should be provided for Chittagong if he at all wants to provide a scheme for the whole of Bengal and not relegate Chittagong to the cold shade of neglect. With these words I resume my seat.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Maharaja Sris Chandra Nandy.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Sir, before the Hon'ble Minister replies to the debate, may I just have one or two minutes to put four questions to him on some very vital matters?

(*i*) When will Government take action upon the Report of the Damodar Canal Enquiry Committee?

(*ii*) The Hon'ble the Chief Minister promised last year to enquire into the affairs in the Eden Canal area: does Government desire to take up this matter? If so, when?

(*iii*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that pending the reconstruction of the Ultadanga Bridge over the Canal in Calcutta, the bridge has been closed to vehicular traffic for about a decade, thus causing great inconvenience to the people of Ultadanga? When will the reconstruction of the bridge be taken up?

(*iv*) What is the present position of the Jumna Anti-Malarial scheme? Is Government contemplating to revise the scheme by re-excavating the river Jumna in 24-Parganas, Jessore and Nadia?

**Mr. M. ASHRAFALI:** Sir, may I just ask one question?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kassimbazar:** Sir, I have very little time at my disposal, and if questions are asked in this way, then much of my time will go away.

**Mr. M. ASHRAFALI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I just ask one question to the Hon'ble Minister as being in the Chair myself, I lost my opportunity of speaking. Will the Minister say what is the Government doing to drain out *bil* at Natore (Bhedra *bil* specially) by deepening the bed of Narod river at village Salikhan?

**Maulvi ABUL HASHIM:** May I be permitted to ask one question also in view of the fact that some statements have been made by the other side about the Damodar Canal?

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** No statement has been made but only a few questions have been asked by the "other" side.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I cannot allow further questionings. I have already called the Hon'ble Minister to reply.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kassimbazar:** Sir, I am thankful to Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal for stressing upon the various difficulties and disabilities under which this department is suffering. I hope when the proper time comes he would give me his fullest support to remove those impediments which I referred to in my introductory speech. As I have already stated we have hardly any knowledge of the irrigation requirements of Eastern and Northern Bengal and that was the reason why we could not come forward with any scheme in the budget. Besides, it was in last September that the current year's budget was passed in this House and we had to submit our schedules in December last and surely, Sir, the House will realise that it is not possible within three months' time to bring forward any scheme which will be of real benefit to the people of this province. Accordingly we have had to ask for a provision of a lump sum grant and we intend to take up a number of schemes in the various districts, in districts which were neglected so long. But, Sir, at this stage I may bring it to the notice of this House that the provision itself cannot show the number of schemes we are going to take up. We can provide only for the work that will be taken up in the course of the next financial year. That means that we will have to make further provisions for carrying on the work in the next year. Sir, as has been pointed out, it is not possible to take up any comprehensive scheme without a proper survey of the areas and for that purpose we have provided Rs. 50,000. It is true that some delay will be caused but that cannot be helped, because unless we have the data, we cannot exactly determine the direction in which improvement should be effected. But I assure the House that every effort will be made to see that no undue delay is caused. Sir, when the list of the Irrigation needs of each district is prepared as referred to already and examined by the Special Officer, it will then be only a question of pick and choose. I am sorry that the time at my disposal is too short to allow me to deal in detail with the various questions that have been raised by individual members, but I can give this much assurance that all matters mentioned by them will be looked into with due care and attention.

Mr. Nisitha Nath Kundu has referred to the Development Act. I cannot help feeling greatly disappointed in the way in which he has characterised this Act; I think the Act has immense possibilities and when brought into operation will bring salvation to the people of the

province. And if we look to other provinces like the Punjab, U. P., etc., we will find that all the big irrigation schemes were undertaken by floating loans. He has characterised the development levy as "tax". It is not a "tax". According to that Act Government charges a levy only when there has been an increase in the productivity of the land and that is again limited up to 50 per cent. It means, if the actual increase in the yield is Rs. 2, Government can claim only Re. 1 and not more. In Bengal also the big irrigation schemes cannot be taken up without borrowing—we have not the fund. Is it therefore unfair to expect that the area which will be benefited would bear a portion of the cost?

Now, as regards the *bil* areas, as has been pointed out by certain members, I have already said that it is an extremely difficult problem to deal with. It is not always safe to embank any area without taking into consideration the drainage of the land. Sir, mention has been made of the floods of the Damodar and the Gumti. I may tell the House at once that controlling these hill streams is a baffling problem. Generally, due to deforestation the slopes of the hills have become very smooth and when water comes down these hills, the rivers flow in torrential streams, and they frustrate all efforts to check or control them. I can say at once that embankment cannot safeguard the people of the area. Sir, as I have already stated in this House in answer to a question that construction of "escapes" for the Gumti are not only under the consideration of Government, but a survey is now in progress. When the Hooghly-Howrah flushing scheme materialises I think the problem of the Damodar will be solved to a great extent.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** What about the rate of the Damodar Canal tax?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kassimbazar:** Sir, about the Damodar Canal levy I am not in a position to make any statement at this stage. According to the wishes of this House, a committee of enquiry was appointed. That committee considered the matter, and have submitted their report to Government. It is now awaiting the consideration and decision by the Cabinet.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** What about the resuscitation of the Bhairab in Murshidabad?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If every member puts a question about his own area, it will be difficult for the Hon'ble Minister to answer them all.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** The Irrigation Minister will be flooded with questions.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kassimbazar:** Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu has asked me three questions. I have already answered the first one. As regards the Eden Canal rate, I may inform the House that this rate is on a voluntary basis and that the people benefited have to execute agreements with Government, either annually or for a number of years before they get water. The principle is quite different in the Damodar Canal area where the rate is compulsory and everyone in the declared area has to pay it. Government have received some applications complaining about the rate prevalent in the Eden Canal area, and the matter is under consideration of Government.

Sir, as regards the Ultadanga Bridge, I may inform the honourable member that I believe only one half of the cost is borne by Government and the other half by the Improvement Trust. It is very difficult for me to say offhand the reason for the delay in the construction of the bridge. I shall look into the matter.

Regarding the Jumna anti-malarial scheme, also, it is very difficult for me to give my reply off-hand. The Public Health Department may have something to do with it. I would look into this.

With these words, Sir, my time is almost up, and I conclude my speech.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal for a reduction of Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu for a reduction of Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Azhar Ali for a reduction of Rs. 100 was by leave of the House withdrawn.

The original demand of Rs. 34,11,500 for expenditure under the head "XVII, etc.—Irrigation" was then put and agreed to.

**50—Civil Works and 81—Civil Works not charged to Revenue.**

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,34,59,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "50—Civil Works" and "81—Civil Works" not charged to revenue".

The policy of this department was criticised in detail in the last session of the Assembly when I introduced this budget. The main points of criticism were that the department was wasteful and that there was considerable delay in the execution of the road fund projects. Since then I have made a close study of the work of the department and I wish to take this opportunity to state the reforms which have been

and will be introduced. I do not propose to say anything at this stage about the delay in the construction of roads and bridges out of the provincial allocation from the road fund. I wish to deal with them later on after the members of the European group speak on the subject. I shall now deal with the other points, viz., the possibility of effecting economy in the construction and maintenance of roads and buildings.

Sir, at the outset I wish to state that no economy is possible by reducing the staff. The work of the department is expanding as will be seen from the fact that there is an increase of Rs. 21,58,000 in the budget provision for the coming year as compared with the revised estimate for 1937-38. Moreover, the road fund work has thrown a heavy strain on the officers of the department, and I am convinced that any reduction of the staff at present will be a very false economy which will lead to delay and waste of public funds on account of want of supervision.

Sir, since I came into office I have devoted considerable attention to the works of the Department, and I have tried to find out means to prevent leakage of public funds on account of insufficient control, carelessness and other causes.

The first point that attracted my attention was that under the rules, calling for tenders is optional in cases of repairs and original works estimated to cost less than 10,000 and Rs. 2,500, respectively. In other words, the Executive Engineers can select contractors for such works and pay them at the scheduled rates without calling for tenders in the open market. The rule was no doubt framed to reduce the amount of clerical work in the offices and to enable the departmental officers to undertake repairs and small original works without the delay that will be caused by calling for tenders. At the same time there can be no question that tendered rates are generally lower than the scheduled rates. I have accordingly amended the rule and issued orders that tenders must be invited in the cases of works, whether original or repair, the cost of which is more than Rs. 1,000.

Another point which has attracted my attention is that under the present rules, departmental officers are not bound to accept the lowest tender in all cases. They are at liberty to accept a higher tender provided they record reasons in full for their action. The reason for this is that the contractor making the lowest tender may be a man of small means and not reliable so that if his tender be accepted, it will ultimately end in loss to Government owing to his failure to complete the work according to specifications. This difficulty is not however insuperable. I am considering the possibility of issuing orders directing that each Divisional Office should maintain a list of approved and reliable contractors and that the lowest tender must be accepted if it is made by contractors on the list. A list of approved contractors is maintained at present in many offices, but the list is not comprehensive, and the

Executive Engineer can enter names on the list or strike them off at his unfettered discretion. This gives rise to complaints for nepotism, and I propose that every contractor shall be entitled to have his name on the list, and shall have the right of appeal to the Superintending Engineer if the Executive Engineer finds him unfit. Similarly a contractor whose name is removed from the list by an Executive Engineer, shall have a right of appeal to the Superintending Engineer. It has been pointed out to me that some contractors are good for some kind of work, but have not the means or aptitude for other kinds. This difficulty can, however, be easily met if two or three lists are maintained for different kinds of work and for works of different magnitude

Sir, the scheduled rates of the Department have also come under my notice. A revision of the rates has been directed, and the work has been completed in all Circles but one. I have also asked District Boards to supply me with their rates so that a fruitful comparison can be made with the rates allowed by Government. The reduction of specifications of roads and buildings is also being examined.

In concluding my remarks I wish to observe that I shall be always very glad to receive suggestions from the members of the House and from the general public as regards the means by which the cost of construction and maintenance of roads and buildings can be reduced. And I can ssure them that any constructive proposal or criticism will receive my most careful consideration

**Mr. J. R. WALKER:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not going to move my motion, but I would like to speak on the general subject. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister in his Budget speech made the following remarks on how economy could be effected. He said "real economy in the public services, can, I believe, also be achieved by increasing the efficiency of the services". It is because I believe that something could be done on these lines, that I have taken the opportunity of speaking to-day. To illustrate what I mean I would like to point out to the House briefly a case which has come to my notice during the past year, from which I think the members of this House will agree that something could be done in the way of economy by increasing the efficiency of this department.

In August 1936 a responsible public body occupying a Government building asked for sanction to improve the lighting of that building at its own expense, the work to be done by an outside contractor. The cost of that lighting would be about Rs. 5,000. Instead of getting a straight answer as to whether the alteration to the lighting would be permitted or not, the usual correspondence began with files going from one Engineer to another and back to the body concerned with the result that 10 pages of foolscap had to be filled up before sanction was given. Not less than 18 months of valuable Engineer's time and

public money were wasted on this small matter, when there was not even any question of public expenditure being at issue. I submit, Sir, that if such dilatory methods are employed over such matters as the one I have just referred to, what will be the fate and waste of time and money which will take place before the great schemes covered by the present grant are likely to be completed. In an ordinary business house, the head of the firm gives orders, and assistants are bound to carry them out. But as far as I can see, in the Public Works Department nobody gives orders. Juniors question the orders of seniors with the result that nothing is done before useless correspondence between officials is carried out. To me there appear to be two types of Engineers, the man who gets on with his job, and the other who does nothing but wastes not only his own time, but the public time and public money. If writing has to be done, then I submit, Sir, that it can be done by clerks, and there is an army of unemployed from which clerks can be engaged. There is much to be done. I know there are Engineers in the Department who would like to do the work for which they are appointed, but they cannot do it, as they get snowed under files upon files. I would ask the Hon'ble Minister to do something to break down this rotten system, and let the Engineers who are keen on their job get on with it. Instead of making them glorified clerks, give them the opportunity to be keen, enthusiastic engineers, who will find some pride in their work, because it is of public service. I could go on about the useless waste of time and money which goes on and I am sure hon'ble members from all parts of the House could do the same. This party will vigorously support the Minister in an investigation into the whole work of this department in order to bring about that economy which the Finance Minister and all of us know can be obtained by increasing efficiency.

There is another matter of special interest to us as members of this House to which I would like briefly to refer.

Since last session we have seen put up in the Assembly compound a building for the establishment of our department. This building, while entirely unobjectionable and very necessary, is little more than a shed. I am told, Sir, on good authority, and the Minister will no doubt correct me if I am wrong, that the amount of public money spent on this shed is no less than Rs. 35,000. If that be so, Sir, it is a sufficient and complete indictment of this department. I am sure every member of the House will be with me in characterizing it as a gross and scandalous misuse of public money sorely needed by the province. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from Congress benches.) Nothing will persuade the members of this House that the accommodation provided could not in proper hands have been put up at a very much reduced cost.

I have much sympathy with the Minister in the difficulties with which he is confronted. Indeed I am reminded of the story of Sindbad the Sailor who had the Old Man of the Sea on his shoulders for a long,

long time, and I trust that the Minister with the support of this House will be able to shake off this burden of inertia, inefficiency and extravagance, and be able to proceed freely with the schemes for the benefit of the province he has in mind.

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission I beg to move the motion standing in the name of Mr. Iswar Chandra Mal, which proposes a cut of Rs. 1,00,000 in the demand of Rs. 1,34,59,000 for expenditure under the head "50—Civil Works" and "81—Civil Works not charged to Revenue." (No separate building for the Legislative Council is necessary. The present Assembly House is sufficient for the purpose.)

In moving this cut motion, Sir, I beg to submit that the present Assembly House is quite sufficient for the purpose of holding the meetings of the Bengal Legislative Council. I cannot but characterize this expenditure, Sir, as thoughtless, extravagant and irresponsible. If I may say so, it is a scandalous waste of public money. Sir, in saying that this expenditure is thoughtless, I may ask the Hon'ble Minister in charge to state whether the desire of the members of the Upper House was consulted in this matter before putting in this item of expenditure in the Budget, and whether the likes and dislikes of the members of the Council were ascertained in the form of a resolution. In such a matter, it would have been better if the opinion not only of that House but of this House as well was taken. I am afraid, Sir, that ultimately the expenditure will exceed the estimate of Rs. 15,00,000. I can very well imagine that the total cost will be in the neighbourhood of something like 20 lakhs of rupees.

Now, Sir, this huge expenditure has got to be borne by the people of Bengal at a time when there is depression all round, when there is a general failure of crops all over the country, and when the nation-building departments are being starved of funds. This huge expenditure is going to be undertaken, Sir, at a time when the rivers and *khals* in the province are dying and are in a decadent condition, and when the country requires drainage for the eradication of malaria and other diseases. Under these circumstances, Sir, is it fair that such a huge expenditure should be incurred? With what face can Government propose seriously to the members of this House, who are supposed to be responsible to the people, that this huge sum should be spent? I repeat, Sir, that this is an irresponsible item of expenditure—irresponsible in the sense that the Minister, who is responsible to the Cabinet, which in its turn is responsible to the people, ought to have taken into consideration the poverty, the diseases and the ill-health of the people before providing a huge sum for the construction of a separate building for the Council.

Sir, in to-day's Questions and Answers, I find that in answer to question No. 251, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health Department admitted that in the district of Mymensingh alone 39,526 people, i.e., about 40,000 people, died of malaria in one year, i.e., from 1st January to 31st December, 1937. In answer to question No. 252, put by Dr. Gobinda Chandra Bhawmik, I find that the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the same department has admitted that the total number of deaths from all causes in Panchkura thana alone in Midnapore district was 3,754 in 1937. In the face of all these things, is it advisable, is it proper, on the part of a responsible Minister to launch upon a scheme involving the expenditure of Rs. 15 lakhs, which, as I have already said, is likely to go up to Rs. 20 lakhs. Moreover, the inequity of this expenditure is heightened by the fact that the Upper House itself is, in the opinion of many, an unnecessary and useless body. Further, money will have to be provided for furnishing this new building and for the usual paraphernalia of a legislative body

I submit, Sir, that this money could have been more usefully spent in giving an impetus to the solution of the urgent problems of the province—

(At this stage the member, having reaching the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the time is so short and the House is so tired that it is difficult to speak as one would like to speak, and, therefore, I am not going to move my motion. Sir, I will speak on the original motion, and as the original motion refers more to the activities of the past Government than of the present Government—

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** On a point of order, Sir. Is the honourable member entitled to speak on the original motion, which is the motion moved by the Hon'ble Minister in charge?

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** Sir, I am referring to the motion of the Hon'ble Minister. Mr. Walker did not move his cut motion and spoke on the original motion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** All right, you will please proceed with your speech.

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** Before I dilate on the road policy of Government, I should like to ask the Hon'ble Finance Minister one question in regard to the budget estimates. We find at page 41 of the Explanatory Memorandum, item XXXIX, the amount of Rs. 25,31,000

shown as receipts against "Transfer from Road Development Account." In the budget, however, there is nothing provided under the head of expenditure.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Yes, there is.

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** Where is it?

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** You will find that at page 117.

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** Turning to page 8, I find the sum of Rs. 22,23,000 against "Subventions from the Road Development Fund" under the column "1937-38," but there is nothing provided under the column "Revised 1937-38."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** You will find Rs. 17 lakhs under "Revised."

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** In page 8 of the Explanatory Memorandum I do not find anything under "Estimate 1938-39." The closing balance must include the item of expenditure on roads which is 25 or 26 lakhs. Then at pages 160-161, in the detailed expenditure of Rs. 25,21,000, Rs. 12,36,000 is shown as to be spent by the Department and the balance of Rs. 13 lakhs and odd are to be spent by the local bodies.

I must give some figures to show the position of the Road Fund at present. The Hon'ble Finance Minister gave figures in his speech and I want to go a little further. The position is this. Last year the the number of projects shown as sanctioned was 9 and the estimated cost approximately was Rs. 65¼ lakhs The expenditure between March and December, 1937, was 4·81 lakhs. The number of projects sanctioned between March and December, 1937, was 9 and the only two estimates which were prepared amounted approximately to Rs. 11·85 lakhs.

The Finance Minister gave the figure of unspent balance on the 31st March, 1936, as Rs. 43¾ lakhs. At the present moment it is at least 50 lakhs. The Hon'ble Finance Minister hopes that he will be able to spend the money which has been allotted this year, and next year he will be able to spend the money which they have in hand. I think he is very optimistic unless some changes are made in the policy of the Government and in the manner in which the work is carried out.

Now, I would like to ask the Hon'ble Minister for Communications, what is the policy of Government? I was a member of the Central Road Committee for 5 years and I have seen the programmes of all the Provinces of India which came before us. Bengal is always preparing big projects, but Bengal and one or two other Provinces are so dilatory that though they have their programmes, they never spend the money that is allotted to them. That is the reason why in January, 1937, the Government of India brought forward a new resolution which was accepted by us with some amendments moved by me. In clause 3 of resolution, it was provided that Local Governments have got to spend the money allotted to them otherwise they would get no more.

What I am trying to get at is—what is the policy of the Government of Bengal? In 1934, a Special Officer was appointed to survey the road problem in different parts of the Province, and we have received from the centre Rs. 2 lakhs for the Special Officer and his staff. Since 1936, the Special Officer, Mr. King, has, I understand, been doing both his ordinary work as Superintending Engineer as well as the special work. I can now quite understand why the report has not yet come forward. I blame the Government of Bengal for their dilatory methods and for not seeing that the staff of the Public Works Department carry out their work according to the sanctioned schemes. Government have got schemes amounting to Rs. 63 lakhs and this year the Central Road Committee has approved schemes worth another 47 lakhs. As regards the policy of the Government of Bengal, I notice that all their schemes are very big schemes. Well, the schemes are no doubt quite good. One of them is the construction of approaches to the Howrah Bridge. But the Government of India has made it a obligation on the part of the Provincial Governments that they should spend as much as possible on feeder roads to railway, and steamer stations and main roads. I objected strongly to 25 per cent. being a statutory obligation because Bengal is so different from other Provinces of India. Other Provinces may spend 40 per cent. on feeder roads but Bengal may not spend even 10 per cent. on them. Bengal is full of rivers and khals, and roads are not so absolutely necessary as in the case of Central Province, the United Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province, where roads are absolutely essential.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SHAHEDALI:** I beg to move that the demand under the head "Civil Works" be reduced by Rs. 100 in order to raise a discussion on the failure of Government to spend the allocated sum from the Central Petrol Fund in session 1937-38. A large number of members of this House are aware that the present Government is guilty of both commission and omission. By commission I mean some times they spend

money most extravagantly, and scandalously. As Mr. Walker has pointed out Government spent about Rs. 35,000 for building a shed in the compound of the Assembly House for housing the Assembly Department.

Now, by omission, I mean that the Bengal Government has not been able to spend the money allotted to them from the Central Petrol Fund for the development of roads. Sometimes the Hon'ble Ministers are unable to do anything for want of funds and they cannot be blamed for that but when there is money in their hands and they cannot spend it, it is not only unwise or lack of foresight but it amounts to a sin.

Sir, the total assignment since the Fund was opened was Rs. 1 crore and 5 lakhs and on the 31st March, 1936, Rs. 43½ lakhs remained unspent. Further in the year 1937-38, Government budgeted for an amount of Rs. 22½ lakhs, the total amount being 66 lakhs; of this 66 lakhs, only 17 lakhs have been spent by Government. We do not know why the whole amount has not been spent at all and the Hon'ble Finance Minister has not given any explanation as to why that amount was not spent. The result is that this year we have not got any grant from the Central Petrol Fund. When the Hon'ble Ministers go out on tour in different districts of the Province, they should enquire of the District Magistrate and the leading gentlemen of the town whether there is any need for roads in those particular districts.

Communication among different places is essential and for that roads are an absolute necessity. A huge amount to the extent of Rs. 66 lakhs has been sanctioned for the construction of roads but the present Government have failed to utilise that amount. There is one road running from Comilla to Doudkandi. This was being metalled for the last five or six years and last year about a lakh of rupees was granted for that road, but only a small portion of it has been spent. There is also another road, running from Mymensingh to Tangail. So far as this road is concerned, the bridging has not been finished and not to speak of finishing of the construction of the road. My submission to the Hon'ble Minister is that in future he should ask the District Magistrate and other gentlemen of the districts whether they require any communication from place to place, so that he will be in a position to know whether construction of any road is necessary. Some say this is being done and if this is done, I do not find any reason why the Hon'ble Minister could not spend that money at all. If the whole amount had been spent the Hon'ble Minister could ask for an extra grant from the Central Funds. It is, I think, due to lack of imagination on the part of the Hon'ble Minister that the amount has not been spent. From this year I would request the Hon'ble Minister to see that the money allotted to this department is spent.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I assume that the hon'ble members of this House have read in the papers the reply that I gave on this question or the speech that I made about a Council building when I moved a motion in the Council for the appointment of a Committee of the Council to consider this question. The position is that the old Government had decided when this building was constructed that with the inauguration of the new constitution it would be allotted to the Assembly for its use. The idea then was that a separate building would be constructed for the Bengal Legislative Council. Later on that Government decided that it would be better not to construct a building for the Council until the new constitution came into being and the Council and the Assembly could then decide what sort of a building they should have for the Council. After the new constitution came into being Government allotted the present building to the Assembly and after consulting the President and the Speaker suggested a scheme for another building for the Legislative Council.

Since then members of this House as well as of the other House have expressed the opinion that there is no necessity for a separate building. Therefore in view of the opinions expressed by the members of this House and the doubt expressed by some members of the Council Government have adopted the following policy. They undertake not to spend anything out of the amount that has been provided in the budget for the purpose of constructing another building for the Legislative Council unless and until a Committee of the Council and a Committee of the Assembly consider this question and submit their report to the respective Houses. At the present time there is no procedure for a Joint Committee of the Assembly and the Council. Therefore Government have suggested and as far as the Council is concerned they have actually moved for a committee and appointed one to consider the question of having another building for the Legislative Council or in the alternative to utilise this building for both the Houses. Government propose to allot a day to move a motion for the appointment of a Committee of this House for a similar purpose. When the two committees have been appointed Government will call a conference with the members of the committees to consider the question whether it is possible to carry on without a separate building for the Legislative Council and if it is not possible what sort of a building and at what cost should be constructed for the Legislative Council. The deliberations will naturally be conducted by the two committees separately and the two committees will submit two separate reports to their respective Houses. After those reports are considered by the Houses Government will come to a decision as to what to do. It is obvious that if a solution satisfactory to both the Assembly and the Council is found Government will accept that, but if there is a difference of opinion between the two Houses further steps will have to be taken by Government to arrive

at an amicable solution of this question. In the meantime Government give the assurance that no money will be spent from the amount that has been provided.

**Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** I don't like to move my cut motion but I like to draw the attention of the Government to the question of the Dacca-Aricha Road. It is a road of provincial importance as it will connect when completed East Bengal with West Bengal. Dacca is not only the second capital of Bengal, but is the rainy season residence of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. It is only 50 miles off from Goalundo the terminus station of the Eastern Bengal Railway but it is strange that in these days of scientific advancement one has got to undergo a very tedious and round about journey over the dangerous river Padma for about eight hours to reach Dacca. The proposed Dacca-Aricha Road will shorten the journey by at least 5 hours if it, of course, be made motorable. Moreover, Manickganj subdivision is cut off from the rest of the world and one wonders to hear that it takes about 18 hours to reach Dacca from Manickganj which is only at a distance of 30 miles.

A detailed survey was made and a plan and estimate were prepared by the District Engineer, Dacca, with the help of the experts of the Irrigation Department three or four years ago. But to the utter disappointment of the people of the Dacca district specially of the Manickganj subdivision the work has not yet been taken up. Representations were made on several occasions but nothing has as yet been done. All officers including the Commissioner of the Division, the District Magistrate, Subdivisional Officer and general public have been insisting on it but to no avail It is apprehended that as it clashes with certain vested interests it is being delayed on frivolous pretexts. This road has been in existence from a very long time under the supervision of the Dacca District Board. The road is divided into three sections. The 1st and the 3rd sections as well as a portion of the second section are already raised. The remaining portion of the second section has not yet been raised and a portion of which was washed away by river. The whole trouble, so far as we can gather, is in respect of the unraised portion of the second section. Objections have been advanced that if this portion be raised it will cause obstruction to spill-flow deteriorating the sanitation and the fertility of the soil. But this assumption is a myth. As there are many well defined channels in the locality and also provision for sufficient number of bridges and culverts has been made there is absolutely no apprehension for obstruction of spill-flow.

Only the other day the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Department of Communications and Works and the Director of Public Health and other experts visited the locality and inspected the road but we do not know the result of the same.

Sir, it is rumoured that a move is going on to delay the project on the pretext of further examination and procuring data. Sir, it has already taxed our patience and we cannot wait any longer. We want quick decision in the matter. All possible data have been collected and it is simply useless to waste time and energy any longer.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, last time when the Hon'ble the Communications Minister presented his budget, I drew his attention to certain important matters which stand in the way of an early execution of road works. I submit that although the report of the Special Officer has not been in our hands, yet some early steps should be taken now, otherwise, even the coming year's allotted sum will not be spent, and I believe, then the Hon'ble Minister will have to come to the House next time and give an explanation as to why the money could not be spent. That is why I propose that a small committee or conference be called where the principle of the selection of road projects could be discussed, for, otherwise, as soon as the report of the Special Officer will be out there will be a scramble from all parts of the province for sanctions and the life of the Hon'ble Minister will be made miserable. Therefore, Sir, unless he takes early steps in the matter it will be impossible for him to carry out any scheme however beneficent it may be. I attempted to draw his attention to this matter through a resolution which however could not be reached on the day allotted. Therefore, I propose to take this opportunity to state that certain principles should be arrived at in sanctioning road projects. These were given in the body of my proposed resolution.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Will you please give us the reference, Dr. Sanyal?

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Yes, Sir, certainly. The number of the resolution is 127, Resolutions Part II, Appendix to the List of Business for the session continuing on the 8th February, 1938. I do hope, Sir, that the Hon'ble Minister will carry on discussions along the lines outlined in the resolution, so that the road policy might be changed and road projects may be taken up quickly. My resolution, Sir, was in the following terms:—

"This Assembly is of opinion that the following principles should be followed in sanctioning such road projects in this Province as may have to be directly or indirectly financed out of allotments from the Central Road Fund or from provincial revenues:—

(1) Projects calculated to serve such areas as are fertile and populated but without any other efficient system of transportation should have first preference;

(2) Sanctions should be given and allocations from the funds for each area should be made on the basis of the needs primarily of the rural population of each;

(3) Projects likely to establish through communication between two or more districts while not unduly affecting the interests of existing railways should be preferred;

(4) Projects serving as feeders to existing railway and steamer routes should have greater attention;

(5) As far as practicable, the projects for improved road should follow the line of existing district board and other roads, if there are any near about the projected route, and these should run in and through populous villages served by them, and not placed at a distance;

(6) Before any road project is sanctioned, a traffic survey at important centres on the same should be undertaken, taking into consideration both existing traffic as well as prospective, in goods and passengers, with a view to ascertain the usefulness of the scheme and the comparative justification of the expenditure involved;

(7) Where low lands or waterways have to be crossed, proper attention should be given to see that the natural drainage of the area served is not unduly interfered with;

(8) The construction of the road portion of a project should be taken on hand first and bridges afterwards;

(9) For the financing of bridge construction recourse may be had to capitalising a portion of the subvention from the Central Road Fund, and small tolls may be levied for a period of years to repay the capital;

(11) The standard of construction of new roads or improvement of existing ones should be commensurate with the local needs for traffic movements, and should have in view the possibilities of quick extension of roads facility rather than the construction of high quality roads; and

(11) Members of the Provincial Legislature concerned with an area in which a project, is to be sanctioned should be consulted before such sanction is given."

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I am glad Mr. Walker has brought to the notice of Government certain disabilities under which some of the officers of this department are suffering, and I can assure him that I shall look into them thoroughly and shall see that they turn out to be engineers in the real sense and not mere glorified clerks.

Regarding the cost of the temporary additional building to this House, I have already stated in my introductory speech that I am revising the Government rates and comparing them with those prevalent in local bodies and firms. One factor regarding these buildings however should be taken into consideration and that is the shortness of time within which they had to be completed. As regards the progress in the construction of roads I can well understand the dissatisfaction felt by the members of this House and by the general public at the rate of progress. Personally, I myself also share in this justifiable feeling of dissatisfaction. I can assure you that the matter is giving me considerable anxiety, and I have no intention to minimise things, but at the same time I would ask hon'ble members to realise the difficulties with which I am faced. On the 1st of April 1937 when I first assumed charge of this department I found an unexpended balance of Rs. 42 lakhs in the Road Fund, a legacy for which I am not to be blamed. However, I issued instructions to the Executive Engineers that the rate of expenditure must be considerably accelerated and a comprehensive road scheme taken up with as much expedition as possible. During the discussion of the budget on the last occasion in the Assembly, I mentioned the reasons which were responsible for this delay, in somewhat great detail, and I need not repeat them on this occasion. We are bound, however, to face these facts as they are, though I must assure the House at the same time that I am striving my hardest for the solution of this perplexing problem—the problem of speeding up expenditure. There are some reasons which are no doubt real and fundamental and will continue to exist. Now, Sir, a riparian area presents obstacles which are peculiar and long investigations have to be made before they can. Then again it must be recognised that previously for want of funds the work of this department was considerably less and that this department was used for many years to do only routine work. The sudden problem of spending large sums of money on original projects and works naturally found them unprepared of and unable to cope with an additional task which was not only considerable in magnitude but was also somewhat new in character. Another delay which requires some explanation is the delay in the preparation of a comprehensive scheme by the Special Officer. It was expected that the work would be finished in October last, but Mr. King, the Special Officer, did not find it possible to finish the work within the time expected. When members see the report they will realise the immensity of the undertaking and will agree that the time he has taken over it can be justified. He has toured over the whole province, the 26 districts, and consulted the district boards and local officers regarding the alignments and getting rough estimates prepared and checked. There were many cases of considerable delay on the part of the local bodies to furnish him with the information asked for. I am,

however, glad to be able to state that out of 39 chapters he has completed 37 and they have been sent to the Press. The printing, however, will take some time, specially the printing of the maps which will be necessary for reference, and they are, I believe, 61 in number. The cost of printing these maps alone would come to about Rs. 50,000 (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Rs. 50,000! as much as that!) It is only a rough estimate. We have got to get them printed in the Government of India Press, the only Press where they can print such maps. It has been stated, Sir, that this delay could have been reduced. Sir, it was partly due to the fact that Mr. King had to officiate as Superintending Engineer for seven months last year and this appointment had to be made on account of shortage of experienced officers to act as Superintending Engineers. But instead of taxing you with further reasons for the delay to spend the amount I will now proceed to tell the House the special arrangements which we propose to make to expedite road construction. I am appointing a Special Officer of the rank of a Superintending Engineer whose sole duty will be to go round and look after the prompt execution of road projects. In the normal course, many proposals have to come from the Executive Engineer to the Chief Engineer, but when the Special Officer is appointed he will be able to deal with these matters directly and without any intermediary. Then again some delay occasionally is caused over the acquisition of land, and if this officer is appointed, I think, he will be able to get things done more quickly. Sir, I think it is essential to have this officer. The Bombay Government who were in a similar predicament also appointed a Special Officer for this purpose and I understand that they are making good progress. I fully expect that with this special organisation it will be possible to make great headway in road making during the coming year. Sir, Dr. Sanyal has asked me to state the policy which the Government intends to follow in selecting the road schemes. I may tell him at once that there is a Board of Communications which advises Government in this direction. I am also thinking of convening a conference of the Chairmen of District Boards to ascertain their views on this point. Personally I feel that when selecting the road schemes, attention should always be paid to the roads which will be of real benefit to the agriculturists giving them facility to convey their products to the market place. Then we should also have roads which connect one district with another and subdivisions with the district headquarters connecting steamer and railway station with towns and those centres. In a word in selecting road projects we should always follow the motto "The greatest good to the greatest number".

**Al-Haj Maulana Dr. SANAULLAH:** Why not transfer some of the works to district boards?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Well, I shall take up that question also in the meeting of the Chairmen of District Boards as to whether we can make over certain roads to them.

**Mr. C. MORGAN:** May I ask one simple question? Is the Special Officer going to be the Secretary of the Provincial Board of Communication as was done in some other provinces?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Government have not yet decided that, but most likely he will be the Secretary.

The motion, standing in the name of Mr. Iswar Chandra Mal moved by Mr. Nikunja Behari Maiti, that the demand be reduced by Rs. 1,00,000, was put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Shahedali for a reduction of Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original demand of Rs. 1,34,59,000 for expenditure under the head "50—Civil Works" and "81—Civil Works not charged to Revenue" was then put and agreed to.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-45 p.m., on Monday, the 21st March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 21st March, 1938, at 4-45 p.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 221 members.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

### Appointment of non-Bengalee constables in the Calcutta Police.

*258. **Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department be pleased to state whether any non-Bengalee has been appointed as constable in the Calcutta Police in 1938?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons?

(*c*) In view of acute unemployment in the Province and Hon'ble Minister's declaration in the last session of this Assembly, are the Government considering the desirability of formulating a policy of recruiting constables from residents of this Province only?

**MINISTER in charge of the Home DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin):** (*a*) Yes; for the armed branch.

(*b*) Unsuitability for the duties to be performed.

(*c*) The matter is under examination.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** With reference to answer (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state as to what makes him think that the Bengalis are unsuitable for performing the duties of police in the city of Calcutta?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The reports based on previous experience show that certain works which are entrusted to the Armed Police and certain works such as traffic duties in Calcutta are not being performed efficiently by the people so far recruited from the

Bengalees. I would refer the hon'ble member to my reply to (*c*) that the matter is still under examination as I want to go further into this question and see why it is not possible to find suitable Bengalees to do this work.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that there are sufficient number of suitable persons among the Scheduled Castes people and Muhammadans who are with regard to their physique and other necessities fit for this service?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It is true; but it is difficult to get them always and what is more it is not merely the physique and courage that are required to meet a difficult situation. The conditions of service are such that sometimes they do not attract Bengalees to it. At least this is the experience, as I have been told, of those who are responsible that when they come into the service, they do not like to remain away from their family and after a time they become dissatisfied and go away.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that in the rural areas the bulk of the policing is done by dafadars and village chaukidars who are all Bengalees?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** They are not whole-time workers. Neither they are really armed nor have they to perform the same duty as the regular Police has to do.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the last trial was given to Bengalees and how many of them were tried?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** From time to time various people have been tried and they have been found unsatisfactory.

**Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the authority or the persons who reported and from whom those reports were received.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I discussed this question with the Commissioner of Police and it is on record that so far the Bengalees have been found unsuitable for the work connected with the Arms Branch.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Bengalees could serve creditably in the Territorial Force, why they cannot serve in the Armed Police?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I submit that is a question of opinion.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is not a fact that so far discrimination has been made in recruiting Bengalees to this service for political reasons?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in the Cooch Behar State and in the Tripura State Bengalees are equipping the local Police Service and are doing creditably the work of all classes of police?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I hope the hon'ble member is not making a confusion between the Armed and un-Armed Branch and if the hon'ble member refers to the Armed Branch, Government have got no information on the subject.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there has been any want of Bengalee candidates for the posts of the constables?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Babu KSHETRA NATH SINHA:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in the last War half the number of soldiers in the Bengali Battalion came from Rajbanshi community and also that there are some Rajbanshis in the Eastern Frontier Rifles? If that be so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether they are not entitled under such circumstances to serve in the Calcutta Police?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I have no information with regard to the first and second part of the question. As regards the third, my own opinion is that it is possible to find suitable Bengalees both from the Scheduled and non-Scheduled Castes and Mussalmans who ought to be fit and suitable for this work, but as I have said before, this is a question into which I would like to go more thoroughly. The reports so far available in the department are that they have been tried and found unsuitable but the question may arise who were the people who came forward, whether they were the right type of people and whether they belonged to the categories from which they ought to come. All these questions require a more thorough investigation. It may be that the men who came up were not the right type of men but that does not mean that they would not be suitable for armed

police if opportunity is given to them to enter that service. That is the question which I want to go more thoroughly into.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government contemplate setting up an independent Committee of Enquiry to investigate into this question rather than rely on the report of the Commissioner of Police?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** He has not said so.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Thank you, Sir.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us the approximate time when he will finish his study and examination on the subject and let us know the result of his study and examination?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It is difficult to tell how long it will take, but I intend to take up this question during the recess.

**Latrines adjacent to the Shiva temple within the boundary of the Pabna District Police barracks.**

*259. **Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department aware—

(*i*) that there is an ancient Shiva temple situated within the boundary of the Pabna District Police barracks;

(*ii*) that the Hindu public offer their *puja* in this temple for scores of years;

(*iii*) that the existence of the said temple is mentioned in the survey map of the Revenue Department;

(*iv*) that 15 latrines have been built adjacent to the said temple by the local authority;

(*v*) that the Pabna Municipality and the public at large vehemently protested against the erection of those latrines; and

(*vi*) that the use of those latrines were kept postponed last year?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that of late it has been decided to open those latrines for use?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, does the Hon'ble Minister propose to take immediate steps in this matter and to allay unrest in the public mind?

(*d*) If no action is proposed to be taken, what are the reasons?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) There is a Shiva temple, but it is not ancient.

(*ii*) No, the public have no access.

(*iii*) No.

(*iv*) One latrine with 15 seats at a distance of 40 feet from the temple.

(*v*) and (*vi*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes, after constructing a septic tank and providing for flushing system.

(*c*) and (*d*) Do not arise.

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:**

১৯৩৭ সালে সেই latrine সম্পর্কে বঙ্গীয় স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগের Director কর্ণেল চাটার্জি এই মত প্রকাশ কোরেছিলেন কিনা যে জেলখানার পরিত্যক্ত জল এবং ড্রেনের ময়লার জন্য উল্লিখিত বস্তি রোগাক্রান্ত হয়ে থাকে, এবং এই পায়খানা যদি সেখানে তৈরী করা হয় তাহলে ঐ জনপদ আরো বিষাক্ত হয়ে উঠবে।

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** That opinion was expressed when it was going to be an ordinary hand-removed latrine. He I think (I am speaking from my memory) suggested that if there is a flushing system and septic tank, then it will not be insanitary.

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:**

সেপ্‌টিক্‌ ট্যাঙ্ক্‌ প্রভৃতি বসাইবার কল্পনা সত্ত্বেও পাবনার মিউনিসিপালিটি প্রস্তাবিত latrine সম্পর্কে ঘোরতর আপত্তি উত্থাপন করিয়াছেন কি না?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I have my doubts about it; I do not think so.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government are considering the desirability of raising a wall sufficiently high to protect the latrine from the view of those who can and do visit the temple.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I think the objection has not come from those who visit and worship in the temple but the objection has come from people who have got houses in the vicinity.

**Reduction in the staff of the Intelligence Branch and Criminal Investigation Department.**

*260. **Mr. SERAJUL ISLAM:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department be pleased to state whether the Government are considering it desirable to reduce the staff of the Intelligence Branch and Criminal Investigation Department?

(*b*) Is it not a fact that acts of terrorism in the Province are not of frequent occurrence now?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) No.

(*b*) Yes.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why, since there has been a wane in terrorist activities, it is not possible to reduce the staff in the Intelligence Branch?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I explained my reasons in connection with a cut motion moved the other day and it is not possible in reply to a supplementary question to improve on that answer.

**Post of a Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Chief Minister.**

*261. **Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Appointment) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether it is proposed to create the post of a Private Secretary to the Chief Minister;

(*ii*) whether it is a fact that a provisional scale of salary has been drawn up for the post;

(*iii*) whether provision has been made in the budget for the salary of the post;

(*iv*) what is the necessity of creating a new post like this; and

(*v*) what will be the nature of duties that the incumbent of the post will be required to perform?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether it will be the duty of such Secretary to help the Chief Minister in keeping contact with the various departments of the Government as well as the members of the Legislature; and

(*ii*) whether it will be one of the duties of such Secretary to assist the Chief Minister in formulating the programme and policy of the Ministry?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) to (*iii*) Yes.

(*iv*) The volume of correspondence and the number of files and documents to be handled by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister.

(*v*) The usual duties of a Private Secretary.

(*b*) (*i*) In so far as such activity would be consistent with the normal duties of a Private Secretary.

(*ii*) No.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us what salary has been fixed for the Private Secretary to the Chief Minister?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** If he is an officer from the service he will get his own salary plus an allowance which may be Rs. 100 or Rs. 150 a month: I am not sure, which.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether he is going to recruit a member from this House as Private Secretary to the Chief Minister?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** In view of the answer given that he will be an outsider, may I just put another question?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Next question.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I put a supplementary question, which is very important?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Well, I have already called out another question.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, the Hon'ble the Home Minister was still on his legs when I rose to put my question; so, Sir, if you do not mind, may I put this question?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** All right, I allow it as a special case.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there will be any increase in the cadre of the B. C. S. fixed by Government as a result of the transference of a B. C. S. man to the proposed post of Private Secretary to the Chief Minister?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** There will certainly not be an increase in the cadre of the B. C. S. At the present moment, there is no proposal for increasing the cadre of the B. C. S. by another officer.

**Srijut Sudhendu Bikash Roy Chaudhury of Island Sandwip.**

***262. Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department aware—

(*i*) that there has been no case of terrorism in the Island Sandwip;

(*ii*) that action has been taken against only one resident of the island, viz., Srijut Sudhendu Bikash Roy Chaudhury under the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act;

(*iii*) that he has been under orders of restriction since 1935 in the headquarters of Sandwip;

(*iv*) that he has a book-selling shop and a tailoring shop at Sandwip;

(*v*) that on the 2nd August, 1937, and on previous occasions too the Government refused to grant him permission to go to Calcutta and Dacca in connection with his business;

(*vi*) that owing to the restrictions put on him since 1935, his business has been suffering;

(*vii*) that his elder brother died recently;

(*viii*) that his grandfather is too old to move; and

(*ix*) that his frequent visits to his native village at Maitbhanga are necessary in order to look after the interests of the family?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of abolishing the order of restrictions on him or granting him a suitable monthly allowance?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that he is the Secretary to the Local Congress Committee?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) to (*iv*), (*vii*), (*viii*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*v*) Permission was refused as it was reliably known that the real object of his visit was in connection with the furtherance of his terrorist activities.

(*vi*) His business should not have suffered as he had ample facilities by the terms of his restrictions to carry on his business.

(*ix*) There are sufficient near relatives at his house to look after the interests of his family.

(*b*) The restrictions have recently been withdrawn in conformity with the policy of Government.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to say with reference to his answer (*v*) in which he says that "permission was refused as it was reliably known that the real, etc.," "reliably known" from what source, and if the gentleman Srijut Sudhendu Bikash Roy Chowdhury was apprised of that and an explanation taken from him?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No, I do not think so.

### Tuberculosis hospital in the Suri Jail.

*263. **Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department aware—

(*i*) that the tuberculosis hospital in the Suri Jail is situated in the heart of the town;

(*ii*) that the dust of the roads near the Jail goes inside the hospital during the months of summer;

(*iii*) that this hospital has about 30 patients at present;

(*iv*) that the hospital is not fitted with up-to-date equipments; and

(*v*) that inside the compound of the said hospital milch cows are kept and milked and vegetables are grown for the use of the general prisoners?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability—

(*i*) of putting an enclosure round this hospital, and

(*ii*) of fitting the hospital with up-to-date arrangement for treatment of patients?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) The hospital is situated inside the jail and the locality has been specifically selected on account of the suitability of the climate to the treatment of this disease in certain stages. I am not aware that any complaint regarding its situation has been made to Government.

(*iii*) Yes.

(*iv*) The hospital is equipped for treatment by injection of calcium and gold. It is not provided with artificial pneumo-thorax or X'Ray plant.

(*v*) Yes, except that cows are never milked there but at the other side of the jail.

(*b*) (*i*) I will examine the proposal and how much it will cost.

(*ii*) I am prepared to consult our medical advisers in the matter.

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the climate of Birbhum is not at all suitable for such cases?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** My information is otherwise.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Is it a fact that there is a kitchen vegetable garden there?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** In the compound? Yes.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** I meant not in the compound but adjacent to the T. B. ward.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No, Sir, there is no kitchen vegetable garden adjacent to the T. B. ward.

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the vegetable garden is situate just around the hospital and sometimes patients are kept outside who are allowed to spit here and there around their beds and in this way the vegetables become contaminated?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am not aware, nor have I received any such complaint.

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that my question (*b*) (*i*) has been mutilated? I did not suggest the desirability of putting an enclosure round the hospital, but the desirability of the Hon'ble Minister of removing the hospital altogether from that place?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am sorry. It was a very difficult thing to follow the question. My Secretary and I differed as to what was really intended and I find that both of us were

wrong. I do not think that there is any justification for withdrawing the hospital from its present site, but I am prepared to examine this question.

### Political prisoner Miss Sunity Chowdhury.

*264. **Mrs. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that Miss Sunity Chowdhury, a political prisoner lodged in the Dacca Central Jail, is placed in Division II; and

(*ii*) that the said Miss Sunity Chowdhury is lodged along with ordinary female convicts?

(*b*) If she is so lodged as a matter of punishment, what are the reasons for such punishment?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of accommodating her along with other female prisoners of Division II either in the Dacca Central Jail or in any other Jail?

(*d*) Is it a fact that newspapers such as *Patrika* and magazines which are usually supplied to prisoners of Division II and some books sent for the said Sunity Chowdhury have been refused to be supplied to the prisoner in question?

(*e*) If so, what were the reasons for such refusal?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) to (*e*) The prisoner in question is classified in Division II, she is not in Dacca Jail, nor is she under punishment. She is in association with other female terrorist convicts and is in full enjoyment of the privileges of her division. She is not lodged with ordinary convicts.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state where Miss Suniti Chowdhury is lodged now—I mean in which jail?

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I hazard that she is in the Midnapore Jail?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes, that is so; she is in the Midnapore Jail.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether she is being supplied with magazines and newspapers that are ordinarily supplied to Division II prisoners?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** This question was put when Miss Suniti Chowdhury was in Division III; now that she is in Division II all these complaints do not exist.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the association of Miss Suniti Chowdhury with other political prisoners is not an infrigement of the Jail Code, namely, that Division II prisoners should not mix with Division III prisoners?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** She has been sent to Midnapore Jail where there are other Division II terrorist prisoners and she associates with them.

**Political prisoners Miss Santi Ghosh, Miss Kalpana Datta and Miss Parul Mukherji.**

***265. Mrs. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that (1) Miss Santi Ghosh; (2) Miss Kalpana Datta, and (3) Miss Parul Mukherji, the three political prisoners are placed in Division II;

(*ii*) that the aforesaid political prisoners, are lodged in the same yard and in close quarters in the Midnapore Central Jail with female leper prisoners;

(*iii*) that the female leper prisoners have access to the quarter where the said political prisoners are located;

(*iv*) that the said political prisoners have several times complained to the jail authorities against such close accommodation and asked for their removal to safer quarters; and

(*v*) that the jail authorities have not taken any action of their complaint or request?

(*b*) Are the Government considering the desirability of—

(*i*) accommodating them in a quarter where there is no risk of contamination by leper prisoners; and

(*ii*) taking immediate steps in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) to (*v*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the yard in which these female political prisoners are lodged is just close to the yard where leper prisoners are lodged?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** There is no female leper prisoner in that jail now.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Is there any male leper prisoner there?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state since when there has been no female leper prisoner lodged there?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No female prisoner was certainly there when this question was answered. (Laughter.)

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether apprehensions caused in the mind of the public that these political prisoners are lodged in a yard which is close to the leper yard are groundless?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the consolidated sum of Rs. 25 as allowance is being sent to Bhabanidas Chakravarty, a released detenu, regularly?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I do not know, Sir, what has been done in the past but they are bound to get it now that the allowance has been sanctioned.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** I submit, Sir, that is no answer to my question. My question was whether this allowance was sent to them, and that, regularly.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I explained to the House that there has been some delay in those cases whose allowances to the detenus and allowances to the family were going to be consolidated. It is just possible that there has been some delay, but once these two allowances have been sanctioned and they start getting them, there will be no irregularity in payment.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

### (answers to which were laid on the table)

### Detenu Babu Bhabanidas Chakravarti.

**73. Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that Babu Bhabanidas Chakravarty who was kept under detention under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act at Kalapara thana, district Barisal, on being released on 10th December, 1937, was not given any expenses to meet his travelling up to his village home in Tangail thana, district Mymensingh;

(*ii*) that he submitted a petition and travelling allowance bill on that account to the Government from his village home;

(*iii*) that he has received neither any money nor any reply as yet;

(*iv*) that since his release payment of his personal and family allowances have been stopped;

(*v*) that his family consisting of 10 to 12 persons were completely dependent on his family allowance of Rs. 15 only granted by the Government;

(*vi*) that since his release payment of his allowances having been ceased his family is now virtually on starvation; and

(*vii*) that the said ex-detenu submitted petition after petition to the Government praying for the continuance of his allowances for a few months more but no reply has up to this date been given?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of granting him personal and family allowances for a year at least from the date of his release?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) and (*b*) He is one of five sons, is single and had no employment when arrested. On purely compassionate grounds an allowance of Rs. 15 was sanctioned for his relatives and that has now been incorporated in a consolidated allowance of Rs. 25 which has been sanctioned for six months. He has sent no petitions to Government since his release. He was given Rs. 21-2 as travelling expenses, and has claimed more from the District authorities which claim is under examination.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Has the allowance been sent and is it being sent regularly?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I have explained to the House that there has been some delay in those cases where the allowance to the detenu and the allowance to the family are going to be consolidated, and it is possible that there may have been some delay. But once these allowances have been sanctioned and the detenus start getting it, there would be no irregularity in payment.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** How long will it take to examine the question?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It is very difficult to say how long it will take.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** My submission is, that the detenu was released in December and even now we hear that his case is under examination.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would ask the hon'ble member to remember that we have have had to deal with 1,100 men whom we have released.

**Restrictions on certain released detenus.**

**74. Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that certain restrictions have been placed on the undermentioned released detenus, namely:—

(1) Babu Kartick Chandra Goswami of Comilla district;

(2) Babu Suresh Prosad Roy Choudhury of Rangpur Sadar;

(3) Babu Debeshwar Bhattacharjee of Gaibandha town;

(4) Babu Sukumar Guha of Munshiganj; and

(5) Babu Jitendra Nath Sarkar of P. O. Tanore (Rajshahi)?

(*b*) If so, what is the nature of those restrictions?

(*c*) Whether it is a fact that no allowance has been given to any of them according to the Government declaration to that effect?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister state his reasons for it?

(*e*) Is it not a fact that each of them applied through the authorities for getting allowances?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) and (*b*) The only restrictions in force against (1) and (2) are the obligation to report their residence and change of residence. The others are at present under no restriction.

(*c*) I am not aware of any declaration that no allowance would be given to any of them.

(*d*) and (*e*) Do not arise.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Did not the Government make a declaration to pay some allowance to the released detenus?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would refer the hon'ble member to the communique issued on the subject.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Was any allowance given to any one of the released detenus in accordance with that communique?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would refer the hon'ble member to the question whether it is a fact that no allowance has been given to any of them according to the Government declaration to that effect. My answer is, that Government never declared that no allowance would be given to them.

**Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAJUMDAR:** Has any failure to report their residence or change of residence entailed any punishment?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would refer the hon'ble member to the relevant clause in the Act under which they are detained.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** With respect to the interpretation put by the Hon'ble Minister to question (c), he has stated that there is no Government declaration to the effect that no allowance should be given. Is that the position?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** That is how I have interpreted it to mean.

### Detenu Birendra Nath Das Gupta.

**75. Mr. SATYA PRIYA BANERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) When did detenu Birendra Nath Das Gupta reach Kularchar, the place of his internment?

(*b*) When was his allowance paid to him after his arrival at Kularchar?

(*c*) Whether crockeries and other articles as per schedule were supplied to him?

(*d*) If so, on what date?

(*e*) Whether it is a fact that the detenu had to fast from the 10th January, 1938 to 12th January, 1938, for non-receipt of his allowance?

(*f*) If so—

(*i*) who is responsible for the delay in payment; and

(*ii*) whether any step was taken against the person responsible on receipt of complaints for non-receipt of allowance by the detenu?

(*g*) Whether any telegram was received by the Superintendent of Police, I. B., Mymensingh, from Mr. J. N. Gupta, M.L.A., enquiring about the health of his brother detenu Birendra Nath Das Gupta?

(*h*) If so, on what date?

(*i*) Whether any reply was given by the Superintendent of Police, Mymensingh, to the said telegram?

(*j*) If not, what are the reasons therefor?

(*k*) What is the state of health of the said detenu at present?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) November 6th, 1937.

(*b*) November 16th, 1937.

(*c*) and (*d*) Yes, on November 6th.

(*e*) No.

(*f*) Does not arise.

(*g*) Yes.

(*h*) I cannot say.

(*i*) No.

(*j*) Because no sufficient address was supplied.

(*k*) Good.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** With reference to answer (*e*), is it not a fact that a wire was sent to the Hon'ble Minister by the detenu himself?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The reply is, no.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** What did the Government do during the ten days between 6th of November, 1937, on which the detenu arrived there and the 16th of November, when he got his allowance? Did he fast during this period?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** There was no necessity for him to fast, because the thana officer offered him a loan, saying that the money could be deducted from his allowance when received, but the detenu refused.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Was not the District Superintendent of Police aware that it was stated in the telegram that his brother is an M.L.A.?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I asked for notice as to what was stated in the telegram.

**Ujjala Mozumder.**

**76. Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department aware—

(*i*) that Ujjala Mozumder is suffering from headache in the Dinajpur Central Jail; and

(*ii*) that her eyes have been seriously affected by it and that she is losing her eyesight?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of giving her proper medical treatment?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) No. She wears glasses to correct myopia, but she has made no complaint nor is there any symptomatic indication of deterioration.

(*b*) Does not arise.

**Detenu Sreejut Arun Chandra Guha.**

**77. Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Special) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what is the present state of health of Sreejut Arun Chandra Guha detained under the provision of Regulation III of 1818; and

(*ii*) what arrangement, if any, has been made for the treatment of gout from which he has been suffering for a long time?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the brother of detenu Arun Chandra Guha is unable to maintain his mother without any monetary help from the detenu?

(*c*) Is it a fact that he used to earn from the Saraswati Press Rs. 150 before his arrest?

(*d*) Are the Government considering the desirability of granting an allowance to the mother of Arun Chandra Guha till his release?

(*e*) Is it a fact that Sreejut Arun Chandra Guha was never convicted of any terroristic crime nor was any charge even framed against him nor was he ever acquainted with the reasons of his arrest and detention under Regulation III of 1818?

(*f*) Are the Government considering the desirability of ordering his release?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) Good.

(*ii*) A qualified medical officer is always available for treatment and orders are being issued permitting Ayurvedic treatment at Government cost if he so desires.

(*b*) I have no such information.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) My information is that the family requires no assistance.

(*e*) He was not convicted in a Court of Law; on his arrest he was given a copy of the charges against him which he was asked to answer.

(*f*) No.

**Rai HARENDDA NATH CHAUDHURY:** How long is Arun Chandra Guha under detention?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I ask for notice.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** Is he under detention for more than 12 years?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I do not think so.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** What are the grounds for not releasing him?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would refer the hon'ble member to the Government policy enunciated in this House on the question of the release of detenus and State prisoners

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to answer (*e*), is it a fact that the copy of the charges referred to is nothing but stereotyped charges of murder, assassination, and the overthrow of the British Government by violence——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I cannot allow that question. You must omit the word "stereotyped."

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** All right, Sir. Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that the copy of the charges referred to in (*e*) is the same as those of murder, violence, assassination and overthrow of the British Government by violence?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I do not accept the construction put by the hon'ble member, nor do I accept that it is always the same. Specific charges are made against them.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** What were the charges enumerated in that particular copy given to this detenu?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am not prepared to state that.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** The Hon'ble Minister says that he is not ready to furnish the information. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when and by whom those charges were framed against Arun Chandra Guha?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** On information received by Government those charges were framed against him.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why he is not prepared to give that information? Is it in the interest of the public?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** On grounds of public policy.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Were not the same copies of charges given to many other detenus?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Had the detenu any opportunity to give evidence before any judicial officer of Government?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Action was taken under the Act and according to the law and the rules provided under the Act.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** When will this detenu be released? And when will the Hon'ble Minister be relieved of answering these questions?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I think, the hon'ble member should wait and see.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that the detenus are told that there are three judges to judge the cases but they are never put before those judges and it is for that reason that detenus do not give any reply to that charge sheet?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question cannot arise.

**Adjournment motion.**

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I leave beg to move the adjournment motion which stands in my name.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Have you got my consent?

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Yes, Sir, I have got the consent in writing. May I move it now?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Hashemy, I think you are mistaken. I have first of all to decide as to whether the motion is in order. To find out whether the motion is in order I have to examine not merely the statement which you have furnished but also the official version of the case, and after that I shall decide whether it is in order.

**Mr. DEBI PROSAD KHAITAN:** May we know what is the subject matter of the motion for which an adjournment has been asked?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You will know that as soon as the Hon'ble Minister makes a statement.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** On a point of order, Sir. The hon'ble member has handed over this with a view to move his adjournment motion. Now I submit that the House is entitled to know the subject matter before it can follow the ruling that you are going to give.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You will know it bit by bit. Don't be impatient.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am not in a position to state that the thing is *sub-judice*. It is not so far as I know.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Sir, my point of order is this. Certain matter has been brought before the House. How can the Hon'ble Minister answer by thought reading without knowing what it is about?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is entirely a matter for me and not for the House.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Our submission is that we are entitled to know.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You are not entitled to know.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will you kindly take his advice in the Chamber if it is not a matter for the House?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is my decision and it is for me to decide whether I should give my consent in the Chamber. But if there is any fact which is to be elicited by Government, it must be in the presence of the member who must have full opportunity to assess those facts.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** May I enquire, Sir, if after hearing the Hon'ble the Home Minister, we are entitled to make further statements.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Certainly.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** As far as I am aware, Sir, some rioting has taken place——

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Where?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am answering to the Speaker for the time being at least.

Sir, a riot has taken place. Some people have been wounded. Some people have been assaulted, and one or two persons have died, but so far——

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Mr. Speaker, is it possible to induce the Hon'ble Minister to turn this side also?

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** This is a private conversation between the Speaker and the Hon'ble Minister.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You are not to say that.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** You said that.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You are not to give any decision. It is I, who am to decide. It is entirely for me to decide as to whether it is in order. I think the House would kindly give me the indulgence of deciding whether it is in order after hearing from such persons as I may choose.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** May I just point out one thing, Sir? If this conversation between the Speaker and the Hon'ble Minister is going down in the proceedings of this day, then I think the House ought to be in a position to follow what the proceedings are.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That I cannot help. It would be in the proceedings all the same.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Our difficulty is that whatever is taking place in the House now is absolutely unintelligible although it is going to be a part of the proceedings. The Speaker is entitled to take the opinion of the Hon'ble the Home Minister before coming to a decision as to whether it is in order or not. If I may say so, Sir, with great respect, the better course would have been for the Hon'ble the Home Minister to go up to the Speaker's Chair and give his opinion to him. That is my submission.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid that is not the practice. The Speaker cannot hear the fact from one side without the presence of the other. There will be considerable damage.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Is it not open to the Speaker just to give the House an indication as to what the matter is about?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Certainly. If the House will wait with patience, it will immediately learn.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Sir, there has been a riot, and assaults have taken place, and two persons have died. But the cases are under investigation, and as far as I am aware, so far nothing has been brought up before the Court.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I am not so much concerned with the death of one or two persons. I am not concerned

with the riot explained by the Hon'ble Minister. My adjournment motion consists of three parts. First part is the death of persons, the second part, injuring of 41 persons, the third part, is the assault of a member of the Upper House by the policemen when he wanted to pacify the mob when the riot was going on. So, Sir, I will draw your attention to the fact that it is a question of privilege of a member of the Upper House, and in this case the member is no other than Mr. Latafat Hossain himself, the accredited leader of the labour group, and who is nominated by no other person than His Excellency the Governor. So, Sir, I want to draw your attention to the fact that if that question of death or murder is *sub-judice*, the third point exists, and it is the assaulting of a member by policemen. It is a definite matter, an urgent matter, a matter of recent occurrence, and, Sir, I submit that it is sufficient for a motion of adjournment.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of order, Sir. I have to draw your attention to Rules 107 and 108 of the Assembly Rules and Standing Orders, and I submit that in those Rules, the procedure for dealing with adjournment motions is definitely and specifically laid down, and in view of this I submit with due respect to you that there is no provision under the Rules for deviation from the procedure actually laid down. Under the circumstances the procedure that we are now following, I submit with all respect to you, is not regular.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think I had better answer Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal first because he seems to be pointing out many irregularities more often than I myself can visualize.

The procedure under Rules 107 and 108 is specific. There are two things which are to be done when an adjournment motion is brought before the House. One is that the Speaker must give his consent, and the second is that the Speaker must decide that it is in order. Now if the House will kindly read Rule 107 it will find that the member asking leave must hand to the Speaker a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed, and must annex thereto the consent of the Speaker in writing; in other words before the motion is moved there must be the consent, and consequently that consent must be given before the member moves. Therefore the practice which has been followed hitherto is that this consent is being given outside this House and it is communicated to the mover.

The next rule is that after it is moved, if the Speaker is of opinion that the matter proposed to be discussed is in order, and it is my decision that so far as the interpretation of Rule 108 is concerned, that that part has to be done in the House. It is the function of the Speaker in the House after it is moved, and after the consent is given, that he will decide whether that motion is in order or not.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** But after it is moved, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is not moved. He must hand to the Speaker a written statement asking his leave to move the motion if it is held to be in order. If all these things are taken into consideration, it would be found that the Speaker has to function in the Chamber to decide as to whether the motion is in order or not. Anyway I am not going to discuss my ruling in the House. My decision is that so far as the adjournment motion is concerned, the matter of giving consent would be decided outside the House, and the matter as to whether the motion is in order or not, the Speaker will decide in the House. I think I can quote the example of President Patel who regularly did it in the Chamber, discussed with both the parties whether the motion was in order, and thereafter gave the decision.

Now comes the question of the motion itself. And I have to decide as to whether it is in order or not. The motion before the House is to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the situation that has arisen in mill areas in the vicinity of Calcutta particularly amongst the workers in the mill areas by stabbing to instantaneous death of an innocent passer-by in Kankinara areas and seriously injuring 14 persons and attacking Mr. Latafat Hosain.

So far as the question of privilege of a member of the other House is concerned, I think it is a well-known principle that a matter of privilege cannot be raised in an adjournment motion. That has to be raised by a privilege motion itself, and if it is a question of privilege it is to be raised in the ordinary course.

The next point is about the 14 persons injured, one man killed and, the case of assault. I have been assured by the Hon'ble the Home Minister who has not been contradicted by Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemy that these matters are *sub-judice*.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** On a point of order. The Hon'ble Minister has not admitted that they are *sub-judice*.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** What I said was that, so far as I am aware, nothing has been placed before the Court.

(Hear, hear, from the Congress Benches.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am sorry, I misheard the Hon'ble Minister. The question that remains is that it involves three matters, viz., the death of a person, an innocent passer-by, and the injury to 14 persons and assault on 21 persons—all forming one subject, and Mr. Hashemy wants to say that the resultant effect of that is the present situation

in the mill areas. Mr. Hashemy to-day has not brought before me anything in the nature of what that situation is and I have nothing before me to find out that the situation is such that it demands that the normal business of the House should be obstructed in the Budget Session with a view to discuss the mill situation. I will certainly consider this matter if Mr. Hashemy can bring forth at a later stage what that situation actually is. If he will give me full particulars that the situation is such that demands the attention of the House, I will be quite prepared to consider it, but for the time being, on the facts which he has presented to me, beyond certain cases of death, of assault and of injury on certain persons, which, by itself cannot be the subject matter of an adjournment motion, because they can be brought before the judicial officers. So I am afraid I have to hold that this motion is not in order.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** May I know how and under what circumstances I can again bring this matter to you, Sir? I am not challenging your ruling, but how can I convince you—to-morrow or day after to-morrow—that this is a serious matter of urgent public importance?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You must satisfy that the situation is such as to demand the attention of the House.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I can bring in further statement of fact to-morrow.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** By that time they will be *sub-judice*.

### The point of privilege.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** I rise on a point of privilege. I put two questions, one relating to the stoppage of pension to the father of Babu Sunil Chowdhury, another relating to the health of Sunil Chowdhury and the treatment meted out to him in the jail, and these questions have been disallowed on the ground that it is a matter of individual concern.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I have already held that whether a question is to be disallowed or not is a matter entirely left to the Speaker's discretion. That matter cannot be brought before the House. If the hon'ble member would like to discuss this matter with me I would be glad to do so in my Chamber. He will please remember that we get seven to eight hundred questions in a session, and I have to act on the legal advice that I get. It is quite possible that members may send representation to discuss this matter may bring fresh light

but in that case the matter may be quite different from what ordinarily the question will be.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of privilege arising out of this. May I draw your attention to Rules 12 and 28 of the Rules and Standing Orders as well as Rule 24, where certain restrictions have been mentioned about allowing questions. I submit that it is not an individual case referred to by my honourable friend. There have been a number of such questions which of late have been disallowed by you, Sir, in your wisdom. We find that, from our side at least, there is considerable difficulty in understanding the reasons therefor. You will kindly give us a chance to openly discuss this matter in this House on any occasion as to your interpretation if it is not against the provision of the Act.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If the House wants to discuss the matters which are left to my discretion and if the House wants me not to exercise my discretion the House can give a relevant motion on the subject, and I will be the last person to obstruct the motion but I do not think it would be fair for the development of any parliamentary system if matters like this are discussed on the floor of the House. I am quite prepared to discuss such matters in my Chamber. Matters like this cannot possibly be discussed on the floor of the House without taking away the power of the Speaker in what he would like to do in the free exercise of his duties. (Hear, hear from the Coalition Benches.)

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "28—Jails and Convict Settlements."

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 36,31,000 be granted under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements".

Sir, I would preface my remarks by mentioning the main items of interest and achievement in the Jails Department since the Ministry came into power. They are:—

(*1*) Measures to relieve over-crowding in jails and to secure better accommodation and segregation of prisoners;

(*2*) closing down of temporary and special jails,

(*3*) repatriation of convicts from the Andamans;

(*4*) review of the classification of *Bhadralok* convicts;

(*5*) review of individual cases of terrorist convicts on certain grounds.

Under head (1), on the occasion of the departure of Sir John Anderson we ordered the release of a large number of old and infirm convicts, convicts with short sentences, and convicts convicted of non-heinous offences with comparatively short time still to serve. The number released under these orders was 2,807. Also under this head comes the continuation of the scheme for opening a new Central Jail at Dum Dum. The buildings are nearly completed and include new blocks of cellular accommodation for over 300 prisoners.

Under head (2), the two special jails established during the civil disobedience movement at Dum Dum, and afterwards continued to relieve general congestion, were closed down, and the special jail at Hijli will shortly be closed also. In addition, a great saving has been effected by closing the detention camp at Deoli in Rajputana by the retransfer of the persons confined there to Bengal.

Head (3) requires no detailed comment. In accordance with the undertaking given by the Government of Bengal, all convicts other than volunteer convicts, have been repatriated from the Andamans. In doing so, the Government of Bengal have not only placed an additional strain upon their accommodation but it remains to be seen that is the influence of the presence of large numbers of this class of convicts on the remainder of the jail population.

Under head (4), vital questions of principle were involved, and it was decided not to attempt at this stage any fundamental revision of the classification system itself. We accordingly took up an examination of individual cases where there seemed to be *prima facie* grounds for reconsideration, and this resulted in the classification in Division II of 331 convicts formerly classified in Division III whose antecedents indicated that they were of a class superior in education, social status and habit of life to the ordinary convict.

The review of individual cases of terrorist convicts mentioned under head (5) has been conducted in accordance with Government's policy to consider the exercise of clemency in individual cases with reference to this class of prisoners. Since this Ministry came in power, premature release of terrorist convicts has been sanctioned in 43 cases.

The most notable feature in the working of the department is the increase in the average daily population in Bengal jails in recent years.

The figures are as follows:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1925 | ... | 11,312 |
| 1927 | ... | 12,111 |
| 1930 | ... | 15,266 |
| 1934 | ... | 19,272 |
| 1935 | ... | 20,248 |
| 1936 | ... | 20,437 |

These figures do not appear to reflect the statistics of serious crime. For instance, the figures are—

| Year. | No. of serious crimes. | Dacoity. | Murder. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1925 | 52,603 | 619 | 724 |
| 1927 | 44,309 | 763 | 715 |
| 1930 | 46,888 | 1,130 | 864 |
| 1934 | 45,228 | 1,280 | 534 |
| 1935 | 43,052 | 1,242 | 554 |

Apart from such extraneous causes as civil disobedience movements, the main increase seems to be in short-term prisoners, and under-trial prisoners.

Since we released 2,807 convicts after Sir John Anderson's departure, our jail population has fallen to a little over 16,000 which is less than the registered capacity of the Jails. But our undertrial Wards still continue to be over-crowded and our treatment of under-trial prisoners is one of the points to which I intend to devote particular attention. The points exphasised are—(*a*) increased accommodation and (*b*) facilities to segregate young, adolescent and non-habitual under-trial prisoners from the influence of habitual criminals.

Interest in Prison Reform so often consists in India in securing additional comfort for individual prisoners, or for classes of prionsers, and in making jail life pleasant. It is perhaps relevant to remind the House why the tax-payer is asked to find money for jails. The Jail Department is one part or cog in the machinery, which the community sets up, to protect itself, and the individuals which compose it from the commission of crime against them. It is the duty of the police to detect the offender and produce him before the court. It is the duty of the court to sentence him according to law. It is the duty of the jail to carry out this sentence, and there should be a fourth and complementary organisation whose business it is to see to the absorption of the released prisoners into normal life. What the jails are responsible for the tax-payer is to treat the person sent them by the court in such a way as to ensure that he will not after release revert to crime.

Prisoners can only be divided into a few broad divisions for jail purposes. Such Divisions should be directed more to the segregation of one type of prisoner, from another in order to prevent contamination, than towards giving prisoners the sort of comfort to which they were accustomed before they were put into prison.

On general grounds it is possible to argue that the better a man's circumstances and education the more is he to be blamed for breaking the laws of the State and the less is he deserving of pity and consolation.

Life in prison, however, is an unnatual life. It is a life or restriction particularly in so far as mental activity, social intercourse, companionship and physical movement are concerned. In addition, one of the main factors determining a human conduct, namely, the normal sexual life, is fundamentally interfered with. From this it follows that prison life may affect the more refined and sensitive characters far more heavily than the dull or brutal type. From a recognition of this fact springs whatever justification there is for differential treatment between classes of prisoners in the matter of diet and privileges as distinct merely from segregation.

All this has its relevancy to "prison reform" on the one hand and "economy" on the other; perhaps an ideal system would be to have separate jails for short-term and long-term prisoners, for under-trial prisoners, and for prisoners classified in different divisions, or segregated because of the nature of the offences they have committed. Young and adolescent prisoners, in particular, need something more in the nature of a reformatory school than a jail and, if it is impossible to avoid sending them to jail, should never be brought into contact with the sordidness of the ordinary jail life as lived by the elder and habitual criminals.

Moreover, it is very difficult to see how the reformatory influences in jails can be brought to bear unless the prisoners are in jail for a considerable length of time, not less than one year; and they are confined in a jail sufficiently small to allow of the Superintendent and the Jail staff knowing the prisoners personally, studying their characters and bringing personal influence to bear.

Many serious jail reformers, therefore, want large mixed jails to be abolished and replaced by a number of comparatively small jails, especially designed for the treatment of different classes of prisoners.

It must be perfectly obvious that any such system must involve enormous expenditure both in buildings and in staff.

While many persons talk in general terms of increasing reformatory influences in jail, there are others who claim with some show of justification that we have to such an extent removed the stigma and fear of imprisonment that the sentences of the courts no longer serve as an effective deterrent to crime. I realise that jails can be regarded from different points of view. The lowest of these is perhaps to regard them merely as a sort of dust-bin in which social misfits are thrown and no body minds very much what happens to them so long as the lid is kept on the dust-bin.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Very picturesque language indeed!

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Others may regard them as places where life should be made so unpleasant that to the criminal the risk of incarceration is one not lightly to be undertaken but, gentlemen, the more enlightened view and that to which I think this House will incline is that they should be regarded more in the light of moral hospitals where weak and diseased characters may be cured and sent, but I for one feel that caution is needed lest they become too comfortable places of residence. As our jails are now staffed and organised, we can for the great majority of our prisoners do little more than improve their physique by good food, regular hours and suitable labour, and any attempt at psychological or moral reform by personal contact is so difficult as to be almost out of the question. I am not satisfied with this position but I must make it perfectly clear to the House that if we wish to undertake moral reform we must revise our ideas regarding the design of jails and the construction of new buildings, and, more important still, regarding the size and qualifications of the staff employed on these difficult and often thankless duties. When I say this I would remind the House that we already spend more on our prisoners than other provinces and if the result of increased expenditure is merely to make our jails more comfortable and more expensive without increasing their efficiency in the prevention of crime then they will militate against rather than serve the fundamental purpose for which they are maintained.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** What is the fundamental purpose, pray?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Prison labour is the subject of much criticism. What is the penological value of prison labour? Prisoners are human beings living in radically abnormal conditions. Labour ought to have some physical value in keeping them fit in body and mind. Suitably hard physical labour has an intrinsic value in maintaining bodily tone and preventing undue brooding and mental boredom or irritation.

In many cases to teach a man to do real hard physical work may improve his physique, improve the mental tone, and make him on release ready and fit to earn his living by labour instead of by begging, cheating, or other forms of chicanery and crime.

Again the discipline of being made to do hard labour may be a strong reformative or deterrent influence. What is a jail to do with a fit labourer on a short-term sentence unless they make him work hard? The classes of labour which can be adopted in a prison must be related to the kind of prisoner to be dealt with, or the length of the sentences, and are also determined by space available, degree of skilled supervision required, cost of production, possibility of sale and so forth.

The points I wish to make are: the most important consideration is the effect of the labour on the prisoners, and the least important is whether it shows a book-profit or not.

If you can combine in any form of labour physical exercise, mental interest, and production which is useful to the department or to Government, you have the main ideals of a good form of labour.

It is no use trying to teach coolies to be typists or insurance clerks to be tailors and *dhobis*. Agricultural labourers are not likely to learn much useful to them in a jail garden. The whole idea of vocational training in jails is beset with difficulties, and before prison labour could be reorganized on any such basis we should have a survey of occupations, ages, and sentences.

Generally speaking, our forms of labour are not at all bad. Much is heard about "oil-mills." Obviously it is a monotonous physical task, not unduly hard for a labourer and unsuitable for any length of time for an intelligence prisoner. On the other hand, it is an excellent short period task for disciplinary purposes, is useful for the short term coolie or labourer, and produces a pure oil for jail consumption which cannot be obtained outside and does much to prevent epidemic dropsy and other deficiency diseases.

Charges of "cruelty" and "inhuman treatment" are usually made without any attempt to substantiate them by evidence. When any attempt is made to substantiate them, it usually boils down to allegations of unauthorised punishment by warders.

The appointment of another committee to enquire into the present administration in Bengal is in my view neither necessary nor likely to be productive. If such a committee starts with the idea of unearthing amazing scandals or of revolutionising the treatment of ordinary criminals in Bengal, it must, I fear, be doomed to disappointment. There is nothing that they can tell us which our Inspector-General and Superintendents cannot tell us or have not told us in the past. It is unlikely that the members would have any knowledge of penology not possessed by the Inspector-General or the Magistrates and Judges who sit on the Quarterly Boards. This does not mean that I think that our jails are perfect or that no suggestion could be made for their improvement, but I consider that machinery already exists for shaping Government's policy with regard to jails on the right lines. Firstly, I have detailed an experienced officer on leave to study prison administration in the United Kingdom and I hope to be able to make extended use of such officers whenever occasion offers. I intend to remove ignorance, suspicion and distrust by giving the leaders of opinion, in particular members of the Legislature, increased opportunities for being connected with the prison administration by serving as non-official visitors and on Boards, to take far more active part in advising and assisting Government in the improvement of its administration and in correcting lies and misapprehensions.

In addition to this, I propose to formulate a questionnaire on all the main aspects of prison administration. This questionnaire will be circulated to the Quarterly Boards and to the non-official visitors and in order that full advantage may be taken of the expert knowledge which many members on the other side of the House, I think, possess, I shall circulate it to all members of the Legislature. I am confident that the answers which I shall receive coming from those who are in a position to study in detail the conditions in the particular jails in which they are interested will prove a more fruitful source of information and provide a more detailed and accurate survey than could possibly be achieved by a peripatetic committee. Such a committee would not only be limited in the time that it could devote to the examination of conditions in a great number of jails, but it would be of necessity limited in size and could not afford that comprehensive representation of all shades of opinion which I hope I will get from the course I propose to follow. After careful and expert examination of the suggestions which we hope to receive, it is my intention to formulate a vigorous and progressive policy with the support of this House behind it. I have mentioned my intention of increasing the association of members of the legislature with the Quarterly Boards and duties of the non-official visitors to our jails. We propose to frame a rule whereby members of the legislature who wish to serve as non-official visitors to jails within the limits of their constituencies will normally be appointed as such for at least one year out of the five years constituting the normal life of the House in which they sit.

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** I move that the demand for Rs. 36,31,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion on the treatment of the prisoners with special reference to political prisoners.

Sir, our jails are living hells, they are the plague spots of civilisation and the situation there is simply appalling. Sir, nothing filters out of the grey prison-walls and if ever the searchlight of public opinion be focussed inside the jails it will reveal such a squalid under-world that humanity will be staggered, even the humanity of this unfortunate country where sufferings are normal features and we are accustomed to them.

Sir, it is taken as an axiomatic truth that prisoners are sent to jail for suffering and punishment, and the jail staff and the medical staff vie with each other in inflicting as much punishment as is possible to inflict on a man without actually committing homicide.

Sir, last year the Hon'ble Home Minister admitted many of the defects but complained of funds. Even this year he puts forward the same eternal plea. But I say, Sir, it is not a question of pound, shilling and pence only; the expenditure of a few rupees more or less. It is a question of policy. Are we going to change the attitude of hatred and

tyranny for an attitude of sympathy and love? Sir, crimes are committed not because of an inner and incorrigible urge. Criminals are as much the creatures of circumstances as honest men are. The criminologist, Lacassgue, is right when he says "societies deserve the criminals they have". Even the recedivists, i.e., the habitual offenders are not born criminals. They are the products of a vicious prison system which confirms them into viciousness. To crush a man body and soul is not to correct him; you cannot coerce a man into morality; you can only persuade him that is the modern view of penology.

Sir, the Hon'ble Home Minister wants us to accompany him to the central jails over there. I hold, if he excuses me for saying so, that no good will come out of such casual visits and it will not help us much. Casual visitors are mere appanage to the jail staff. They see things as the authorities want them to see. They only see the surface glossary and cannot see the hidden things. Sir, I would request the Hon'ble the Home Minister not to delude himself like the Hon'ble the Finance Minister by thinking that their predecessors have done so much that he has nothing left to do. Yes, Sir, their predecessors have done enough which he has to undo if he wants the jails to be reformatories as they are all the world over. Let him see the hidden things. Let him take courage in both hands and lift up the nightmare atmosphere that prevails inside the jails.

Let me, Sir, now catalogue a few of the festering sores of the prison administration. There is autocratic sepoy rule in every jail of Bengal. The sepoys never consider prisoners as human beings but felons to be treated very harshly. They never address them by their names but as *chore*, *dakku badmash*, *shala* and other choicest vocabulary. The convicts must address the sepoys as "huzurs" and "babus". They are forced to do humiliating menial work, such as, polishing the boots of the sepoys by their towels and massaging their legs. The prisoners must not talk, sing, laugh and there reigns absolute silence inside jails and only sounds like *jora*, *jora baita*, *boy file muth jao*, *marath*, *marath*, *toojey tho danda*, resound in the silence. The convict lives in perpetual terror. *Dholai* and *Balan* are two technical terms which indicate severe beating—of course unofficially—by several persons with sticks, batons and boots, on a convict by placing him under a blanket in such a way that no visible injury may remain. On the slightest pretext the prisoners are subjected to this treatment to keep their mouths shut. I can cite many instances of assaults on the convicts, and that by the jailor, by the sepoys, by even the doctors on sick convicts. Would it be believed that prisoners to avoid such ill-treatment commit suicide? I know many instances. Here is one: this occurred inside the Dacca Jail and I hope my friends Messrs. Monoranjan Banerjee and Giasuddin Ahmed who were then inside the Dacca Jail will bear me out. A poor convict was subjected to *Dholai* and was brought in a semi-conscious state into the hospital. After several days when he still complained of pain on the waist, the doctor scolded him by saying that he

was malingering and poured boiling water on his waist when blisters appeared. The man became desperate and taking advantage of the unmindfulness of the dozing sentries, crawled on all fours and got up on the top of a tree. He won't get down until the Superintendent would come and hear his complaints. There was great commotion inside the jail. The Superintendent came but would not listen to his entreaties. He took a very threatening attitude; forthwith sent two convicts up the tree to drag the fellow down. He was at his wit's end, feared another *Dholai* and threatened suicide. When they were at the point of catching him, he, much to our horror and amazement, jumped from that great height and committed suicide. If my memory fails me not it was the sultry month of April and a Saturday noon and the fun was that when from the top of that tree, from that great height he fell and was writhing in agony and pain, and the Superintendent stood there with all his retinue silent and the poor man was not given water but all the while a convict fanned the Superintendent with a big Durbari fan.

Sometimes omnibus punishment is meted out to the prisoners for no fault whatsoever. At Hijli I saw hundreds of prisoners with bar-fetters for no fault of theirs, but as a measure of protection simply because the jail had a barbed wire fencing for a wall. What a pathetic sight the jail presented when the poor miserable prisoners in long files dragged their weary swollen feet and the constant metallic sound of their fetters rent the air day in and day out.

The jails are a seething mass of corruption. Everyone is there to cheat the poor convicts. The ration prescribed falls far short of nutrition value and the proper amount of food is not given to the convicts. Even then it must pass through several process of distillation before it actually reaches the convict. The contractor must offset his loss from the convicts for the salami he pays to the jailor. Then the jamadars, the sepoys and the warders must have their shares and the last but not the least the process of distillation takes place in the kitchen. The convict grows vegetables by the sweat of his brow and the Jail Code provides that he must have the first claim on the vegetables but in actual practice the prime of the vegetables go somewhere else. He only gets the leavings thereof. The core of the cabbage and the cauliflower goes to somebody else's table and he gets only the outer leaves. The sight of vegetables going to some unknown destination once made a fellow prisoner of mine quote a pathetic line from a Vaisnava poet

"শধিরে আমার বধুয়া আন ঘরে যায়
আমারি অঙ্গিনা দিয়া"

—"Oh, my dear friend! my own beloved goes to somebody else's house even through my own courtyard." The jail garden never fails for if it

fails and the Inspector-General is not satisfied with the jailor's explanation the jailor shall have to pay from his own pocket for the vegetables and the condiments bought in the market. In consequence the prisoners suffer and any weed that grows in the garden passes as vegetables. Ripe brinjals and radishes unfit for the consumption of cattle are dried and preserved for rainy season and soup prepared from them far outdoes in taste and flavour the witche's cauldron.

There is a regular traffic of contraband articles with the full knowledge and connivance if not with the actual help of the jail staff. If the Hon'ble the Home Minister pays a surprise visit to a jail and conducts a search, he will at once get an idea of things prevailing there. That will testify to the honesty of his staff there.

About the jail doctors the less said the better. In hardheartedness he has no parallel in the world. What he does is that he prescribed bad diet, metes out sham treatment, refuses to admit prisoners in the jail hospital when they are really ill and tampers with the weight records of the prisoners to keep them cheery and in the normal level.

As regards the amenities of life they are conspicuous by their absence. No mosquito net is provided in this land of malaria and the latrines and urinals are of a primitive character and most repugnant to elementary sense of decency. If one commits the indiscretion of using the latrine at night he is given the penal diet the following day. Urinals at night overflow to the infinite discomfort of the bare-footed prisoners. Last year the Hon'ble Home Minister promised to remedy the system of continuous counting at night but he seems to have completely forgotten all about it. The lot of the political prisoners is still worse. They are placed under more restrictions and are generally kept in cells. These dingy cells are so constructed that sun's rays at no time of the year ever enter there. In Midnapore Jail there are cellular barracks. The Jail Committees have ordered their abolition. But they won't be abolished. Senseless indignities and pin-pricks are imposed on prisoners there. People do not resort to hunger-strike for the mere fun of it. Some members of the Treasury benches who observe Ramzan know what it is to go without food even for a day. Let them from the light of their own experience visualise what it is to die of starvation when every drop of blood cries for food. They do not commit suicide taking resort to hunger-strike for the mere fun of it.

Emphasis is rightly placed on economic programme by a large section of this House. I ask the House to remember that an economic programme is worth nothing if all principles of humanity and liberty are violated so ruthlessly. Do not those principles constitute the motive force behind all economic programme? If you take them away, you deprive the nation of its moral energy. For men as well as nations do not live by bread alone. Let us for once feel as human beings forgetting that we are Muhammadans, Scheduled Caste or Hindus, let us

for once feel as Bengalees, let us for once be saturated with love for our neighbours and harken the call of the Lord who preached "Judge not that ye be not judged, condemn not that ye be not condemned". The cry of the prisoners whom oppression and tyranny made insane whose wails broke in upon the silence of night and rang through the corridor is still ringing in my ears, and therefore, Sir, in their name and in the name of suffering humanity, I appeal to this House to accept this cut motion.

**Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN:** I support this cut motion that has been moved in such harrowing language by my friend Mr. Haripada Chattopadhaya. I confess that recent debates have made some of us extremely sensitive about our self-respect and some of us have therefore become silent but mournful observers of what is going on around us. The Hon'ble the Chief Minister, the other day, accused the Opposition of not being in the habit of speaking the truth. I confess that for a moment when I heard this I was dismayed, but the next instant I remembered much to my relief, that the Chief Minister had belonged to the Opposition all his life and in saying what he did, he was merely given us his own personal reminiscences. I do not envy him the change of luck which enables him to have some thrilling experiments with truth and I hope for his own sake he will survive this terrible ordeal. I have great personal respect and admiration for the Hon'ble the Home Minister and the Hon'ble Chief Minister and I shall be bound to say that between the two of them they have produced a most dismal jail budget.

The Hon'ble the Home Minister has perhaps his excuses. He has been trained in the old bureaucratic school and during the 12 months that we have had the good fortune of meeting him here, he has never made an attempt to disguise or conceal his bureaucratic mentality (Laughter). What can I however say of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister? When he placed his first budget estimates before the House he reminded us with his new found eloquence that he had learnt his political alphabets at the feet of the late Mr. C. R. Das. He has reminded us several times since that he follows with admiration what was being done by another Mr. C. R. in another province. He has also given us many times to understand and particularly in the course of his speech on the last budget estimate that he has very great admiration for popular opinion and yet we find that in the budget which he has placed before us, so far as the Jail Administration is concerned, there is not the slightest touch of the human hand. The Hon'ble the Home Minister promised us at the last budget discussion that, as soon as funds permitted, Government would do its level best I am quoting his own language—to effect improvement in the treatment

of prisoners in the jails. I ask him in all sincerity what has he done? I find from the budget estimate that a sum of Rs. 5 lakhs only has been released owing to the repatriation of prisoners from the Andamans. Have any amenities been provided for prisoners in local jails with the money thus released? The only amenity which we find provided for is the extravagant sum of Rs. 936 for the purchase of mustard oil which prisoners all over Bengal might use for inunction once a week. (Mr. ABU HOSAIN SARKAR: What about the treatment of venereal diseases?) If there are 15,000 prisoners in the whole of Bengal it works out at Rs. 75 or Rs. 76 per month. When I speak of all this in an Assembly like this I really hang my head down in shame. I do not know what the Hon'ble Home Minister wants to do. When the gates of the jail are closed upon a prisoner, the gates of civilization and of humanity close upon him, and when he emerges out of it, he leaves behind him all the finer instincts which God endowed him with, unfit to re-enter society or to re-enter the human race and unfit to be everything except to be a Minister of the Cabinet. I shall ask the Home Minister to remember that all the persons who are sent to jail are not necessarily criminals and are not necessarily guilty of the offences for which they are sent to jail. Some go there because of the vagaries of the Magistrate, some go there because of the vagaries of the law, and a lot go there because of the vagaries of the police. Is any discrimination made between undertrial prisoners and prisoners convicted of the most serious crimes? None whatsoever. Whenever a cut motion is brought forward in this House, the Hon'ble Minister in charge gets up and tries to defend the iniquities of his department as best as he can and Whips go all over the House trying to defeat the cut motion. On the occasion of the last budget debate, after the conclusion of the discussion I was extremely sorry to see the Hon'ble the Finance Minister say, with a smile, which betrayed the hard lines of an otherwise attractive face, that the Opposition had not been able to carry one, single cut motion. I was really sorry when he said all that and I was sorry for his fall. That was not a matter to be proud of. So far as I can understand the value of the budget discussions, they are held to enable the Finance Minister and other Ministers to inform themselves of the trend of public opinion, to enable them to inform themselves of the needs and improvements of the province and to make provisions accordingly in the next budget. If instead of that the only thing which they do. (At this stage the Hon'ble the Finance Minister and the Chief Minister were having some conversation.) Shall I go on or shall I stop?—

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** No, no, you go on, we are listening to you all the same, but that does not necessarily mean that we will have to stare at you.

**Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN:** I know that you can do more than one thing at the same time. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister will perhaps agree with me that nothing is practically done for the prisoner in jail. No social amenities are provided for him;—no religious instruction is given to him, nor any physical amenities are provided for him. Is it therefore a matter of wonder that when a man leaves the jail he learns more dishonesty inside the jail than he knew before he entered it? Things are taught him there, there he learns things which before he went to the jail he had no earthly chance of knowing. The whole staff is dishonest and I shall only recall one recent instance in the Alipore Jail about which I wanted to ask the Hon'ble the Home Minister a short-notice question but which he did not agree to answer unless 15 days' notice was given him. There in the Alipore Central Jail a batch of prisoners—60 or 70 in number, not political prisoners, but ordinary prisoners, asked only for better food because they told the Superintendent that they could not swallow the food that was given to them, to eat. That was, Sir, on the 9th of February last. What happened? On the very same day, they were subjected to jail punishment and on the next day, i.e., on the 10th a Magistrate was brought from the court against all the provisions of the Prison Act inside the jail and there he went on trying batches of these prisoners and sentencing them to 1 year's rigorous imprisonment each. The only fault which they had committed, the only offence they had committed was that they had asked for better food—not that they had put forward any political grievance or asked for any other reforms, but they said in all humility that their food was what no man could swallow. The only answer was that, illegally, deliberately illegally, these prisoners were sentenced in batches of seven and eight to one year's rigorous imprisonment. (Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN: Who was the Magistrate: A VOICE: Mr. Pankaj Sen) Well, I cannot mention his name. What is the use of reading to us pages after pages of carefully written promises and half-promises if this is the spirit in which you are going to tackle jail administration and the treatment of prisoners in the jails? I hope that in view of the influence under which the Hon'ble the Home Minister is coming these days, we shall find that in the near future he will be able to find that there are real grievances and he will try and provide for amenities for prisoners as best as he can.

(The House was then adjourned for 15 minutes.)

*After Adjournment.*

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRAVARTY:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 36,31,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the treatment meted out to the convicts.

মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, আজকে এই হাটাই প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত কোরতে যেয়ে আমাকে এমন একটি বিষয় বেছে নিতে হয়েছে যা নাকি দুনিয়ার সব চেয়ে বারা অবজ্ঞাত উপেক্ষিত এবং দুর্গত, তাদেরি ব্যাপার। মাননীয় অর্থসচীব মহাশয়ের সুদীর্ঘ বক্তৃতার মধ্যে এই হতভাগ্যদের সম্বন্ধে একটা সামান্য শব্দের উল্লেখ পর্য্যন্ত নেই। মহানুভব অর্থসচীবের অকৃপণ, অকুণ্ঠ ও অপর্য্যাপ্ত উদারতার মহিমায় রাজ্যের দিকপাল, মহাপাল আশ্রিত ও ভক্তের দল হুহাত তুলে তাঁর জয় গানে বাংলার, আকাশ বাতাস মুখরিত কোরে তুলেছে। তাঁর সদাশয়তায় উচ্চ পরিষদের গৃহহারা সদস্যেরা গৃহ পাবেন, হতযৌবন বাংলার যুবশক্তির কল্যাণ হবে, অন্তঃপুরচারিকা বাংলার বোর্ধা ধারিণীদের মুখে হাসি ফুটবে। তাঁর মহিমা ঘোষনা করতে করতে পুলিশ তার ছেলে পাকা লাঠি ও বেটনকে আশীর্ব্বাদ জানাচ্ছে, পেসকার, ও কেরানীকুল তাদের সাফাই হাতের দিকে কোরছে সস্নেহ দৃষ্টিপাত।

প্রাপ্তির অসামান্যতা রাজ্যের সকলকে অভিভূত কোরেছে—প্রজা ও জনসাধারণকে কোরেছে বিস্মিত। শুধু পাষান কারার অন্তরালে দুর্বহ জীবণের ভারে বারা মুমূর্ষু তাদের কথাই অর্থসচিব মহাশয়ের মনের কোনে উদয় হয় নি। অর্থসচিব মহাশয় যে বাল্মিকী নন, তা আমি জানি; আরও জানি যে আমিও রবীন্দ্রনাথ নই, তবুও আজ "কাব্যে উপেক্ষিতার" কথাই আমার মনে পড়ছে, অনুকরণ করবার আমার শক্তি নেই, তাই বিশ্বকবির অনুসরণ কোরে আমার বোলতে ইচ্ছে হোচ্ছে—হে মহানুভব অর্থসচিব, তোমার অফুরন্ত করুণার অকিঞ্চিৎকর একটি কণা এদের দিকে ছড়িয়ে দিলে তোমার অমর লেখনি কি কলঙ্কিত হতো? তোমার অব্যাহত দানের অবারিত গতির একটু ছোঁয়াচ দিলে তোমার রাজ কোষ কি ফুরিয়ে যেতো? অবশ্য অর্থসচিব মহাশয়ের বলবার মুখ আছে। আর আছে স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিবের বৃহৎ মস্তিকের অপূর্ব্ব যুক্তি জাল। তাঁরা এক নিশ্বাসে, এই মুহূর্ত্তে সদম্ভে ঘোষনা করবেন যে ষ্টালিন, মুসোলিনী বা হিটলার যাদের কামানের মুখে উড়িয়ে দিতো বা সাইবেরীয়ার বালু খাইয়ে বেঁধে রাখতো, তাদের জন্যে বরাদ্দ কোরেছি আমরা প্রায় ৩৬॥ লক্ষ টাকা; তাদের রক্ষণাবেক্ষণের জন্যে মোটা মাইনে দিয়ে, নিযুক্ত কোরেছি কত বড় বড় পণ্ডিত কর্ম্মচারী, দিয়েছি তাদের সুসজ্জিত কক্ষ, অপর্য্যাপ্ত আহার, সাজ সজ্জা, হাসপাতাল, কুইনাইন—এককথায় "বাজার সুদ্ধ্যা কিন্যা আইন্যা ঢাল্যা দিছি পায়"; তবুও বিশ্ব নিন্দুক তোমরা তোমাদের মন উঠবেনা, তবুও তোমরা প্রভু ইংরেজের জয়ধ্বনি কোরতে চাইবেনা। হাল ছেড়ে দিয়ে বিজ্ঞের সুরে বোলবেন তাঁরা—"এই জন্যেই দুঃখও তোমাদের ঘুচলোনা!"

৩৬ লক্ষ টাকার কথাটা শুনে আমাদের মনে যে দোলা না লাগে তা নয়, এত আর ১০।২০ হাজার নয়,—একেবারে ৩৬ লক্ষ চোখেত দেখা দূরের কথা, কানেও বেশী শুনিনি তাই ঐ আশ্চর্য্য অঙ্কটার দিকে তাকিয়েও থাকতে ইচ্ছে হয়েছে অনেকক্ষণ,! ১৯৩৭ সালের report আমার হাতে এসে আজও পৌঁছায় নি। তাই ৩৬ সালের report নিয়েই এই অঙ্কটার বিষয় আলোচনা কোরবো। অবশ্য বোলতে বাধা নেই যে দুটোর ভেতর পার্থক্য বড় কিছু নেই, কোথাও বেড়েছে হাজার দুয়েক আবার কোথাও কোমেছে হাজার পাঁচেক, বাংলার বিভিন্ন জেলের মোট আমদানী সংখ্যা ছিল—১,৪৮,১৭২। এর মধ্যে পুরুষ ১,৪৫,৫৯৫ আর মেয়ের সংখ্যা ২,৫৭৭। এই সংখ্যার মধ্যে দণ্ডিত বন্দী, বন্দীনীর সংখ্যা ৬২,৫৩৫। পড়ে প্রতিদিন বাংলার বিভিন্ন জেলে ছিল ২২,৭১৮-৮২। যারা সর্ব্বদাই এবং সর্ব্বদেশেই হিন্দু মুসলমানের আনুপাতিক সংখ্যা নিয়ে মাথা আমিয়ে থাকেন, তারা নিশ্চিন্ত ও সুখী

হবেন শুনে যে অন্ততঃ এই একটি ক্ষেত্রে গবর্ণমেন্ট জনসংখ্যার আনুপাতিক সংখ্যা সম্বন্ধে কোন প্রকার বৈষম্য দেখান নাই, উদার গভর্ণমেন্টের এই সমতারক্ষায় আশাকরি তাঁরা পুলকিত হবেন। বাংলার জেলে মুসলমানের আনুপাতিক সংখ্যা ৫১·৪৮ আর হিন্দু ও শিখের সংখ্যা—৪৫·৭০।

এই ৩৬॥ লক্ষ টাকার ব্যবচ্ছেদ কোরে (অবশ্য শব ব্যবচ্ছেদ কোরে নয়।) এইবার বাংলার এই পৌনে দুই লক্ষ হতভাগ্যের জীবণ যাত্রার স্বরূপ বুঝতে চেষ্টা করবো।

আহার, পরিচ্ছদ এবং রোগের ঔষধ ও পথ্য;—এই তিনটি মানুষের জীবনধারণ করবার অপরিহার্য্য উপাদান। আহার্য্যের জন্য বঙ্গীয় গবণমেন্ট মোট বন্দীর হিসাবে খরচ কোরেচেন ৯,৩২,২২৫ টাকা অর্থাৎ মাসে তাদের প্রতিজনের পেছনে খরচ হোয়েছে ৩।৴১০ পরিচ্ছদের পিছনে খরচ হোয়েছে—১,২৪,২৫০ টাকা অর্থাৎ প্রতিজনের পিছনে খরচ হোয়েছে ।৴৫ আনা। হাঁসপাতালের দরুণ খরচ হোয়েছে ১,৫৮,৩১৮ টাকা অর্থাৎ মাথা পিছু ।৴৫ আনা।

স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিব মহাশয় এক্ষুনি তারস্বরে বোলে উঠবেন, "যে দেশের লোকের না খেয়েই মরবার অধিকার একচেটে, রোগে যারা ঔষধ পথ্য দূরের কথা শুধু জলও পায় না, সে দেশের মহাপাপীদের জন্যে যে ব্যবস্থা করা হোয়েছে, তা প্রয়োজনের অতিরিক্তই! এবং এই অতিরিক্ত খরচের জন্য সদাশয় গভর্ণমেন্টের নিকট কৃতজ্ঞ থাকবে শুধু তোমরাই নয়, তোমাদের চৌদ্দ পুরুষও!" এ অকাট্যযুক্তি না মেনে উপায় নেই। ঠিকেদার অর্থাৎ আপনারা ইংরেজী নবিসেরা যাকে বলেন Contractor তাঁদের এবং জেলের বড় কর্ত্তা থেকে সেপাই মহারাজের ভাগে এই বরাদ্দের কত অংশ ব্যবস্থা করা হোয়েছে, তা হিসেবে লেখা নেই। ওটা বাদ দিয়েও বলা যেতে পারে যে মাসিক ৩।৴১০ হতভাগারা খেতে পায় না। বাংলার বিভিন্ন জেলে প্রায় ১৫ শত খৃষ্টান, ইউরোপিয়ান, চীনা প্রভৃতি আছে। এবং ভদ্র-বেশী জুয়াচোর, বিশ্বাস-ঘাতক, নারী-হরণ-কারী দ্বিতীয় ডিভিসনের কয়েদী আছে, ইহার বর্ণ ও পোষাক মাহাত্ম্যে উন্নত ধরণের, খাদী ও পরিধেয় পেয়ে থাকেন, এদের বখরা বাদ দিলে যা থাকে তাই খেয়ে ও পোরে বাংলার বন্দীশালা থেকে পাপীরা জন্মের মত ৩৬ সালে বিদায় নিয়ে গিয়াছে ২৪২ জন। এই ২৪২ জনের মধ্যে ৫০ গেছে যক্ষার কবলে, ৩৫ আমাশয়ের আলিঙ্গনে, ৪৪ নিউমোনীয়ার কোলে, আর ১৬ জন আমাদের চিরপরিচিতা ম্যালেরিয়ার প্রেমে। ম্যালেরিয়া বাদে আর তিনটি সম্বন্ধেই অসঙ্কোচে এবং প্রতিবাদের আশঙ্কা না রেখে বলা যেতে পারে যে উপযুক্ত আহার ও পরিচ্ছদের অভাবেই ১২৯ জন লোক মারা গেছে। বাংলার ১২৯ জন হতভাগ্য বেঁচে থাকবার অনন্ত দুর্দ্দশার হাত থেকে রেহাই পেয়ে নিশ্চয়ই হাপ ছেড়ে বেঁচেছে। আর তারা যে বেঁচে মোরবার আগেই মোরে বেঁচেছে এর সবখানি কৃতিত্ব আমাদের ইংরাজ সরকারের।

৩৬ লাখ টাকা খরচের তালিকা দেখিয়েও বাংলা সরকার ১॥ লাখ লোকের ভিতর থেকে ম্যালেরিয়া তাড়াতে পারেন নাই। এ সত্ত্বেও ঘণ্টার পর ঘণ্টা ধোরে আমাদের জনপ্রিয় প্রজা হিতৈষি স্বাস্থ্য-সচিবের ম্যালেরিয়া সঙ্কট ত্রান Scheme এর চৌহদ্দি শুনতেই হবে এবং তার জন্যও খুব বেশী নয় মোটে ৫০ লক্ষ টাকা দক্ষিণা দিতে হবে। আর জেলখানা থেকে ম্যালেরিয়ার বিরুদ্ধে যুদ্ধ করবার জন্য বরাদ্দ করা হোয়েছে মাত্র ২৫,০০০ টাকা। গৌরী সেনের টাকার মা, বাপ থাকতে নেই।

শ্রীমতী মোরসেদু (আশা করি শ্রীহীন বারী মহাশয় "শ্রীমতী" শব্দ শুনে আঁতকে উঠবেন না)। পর্দ্দাপুষ্টিতা মুসলমান মহিলাদের শিক্ষার স্বাতন্ত্র দাবী কোরে গত এক বছর ধোরে আন্দোলন

চাচ্ছিয়ে আসছেন। মাত্র ১৷৷০ পন্তা মুসলমান মেয়ের জন্য যদি পর্দা কলেজের আবশ্যকতা তিনি উপলব্ধি কোরে থাকেন, আমি যদি বাংলার ৯৪৮ জন বন্দিনীর জন্য একটি স্বতন্ত্র জেলের দাবী জানাই, আর কারও সহানুভূতি ও সমর্থন না পেলেও আমি আশা করতে পারি যে শ্রীমতী মোরসেদের সমর্থন থেকে আমি বঞ্চিত হব না। বিশেষ কোরে এই বন্দিনীর মধ্যে মুসলমান নারীর সংখ্যা যখন দেখতে পাই ১৭৩। শ্রীমতী মোরসেদ মুসলমান বন্দিনী নারীর জন্য যদি স্বতন্ত্র জেলের দাবী উপস্থিত করেন তাও সমর্থন কোরতে আমি রাজী আছি। যাদের কোন ধারণা নেই জেলের, তাঁরা আমার এপ্রস্তাবে রাজী হবেন না জানি; আরও জানি যে তাঁরাও রাজী হবেন না যাদের জীবনের ব্রত কোন বিচার না কোরে বর্ত্তমান শাসনতন্ত্রকে সমর্থন করা। কিন্তু আমি এই পরিষদের চিন্তাশীল সদস্যদের দৃষ্টি এদিকে বিশেষভাবে আকর্ষণ কোরতে চাই। দীর্ঘকালের অবরুদ্ধ, অসংযত ও অশিক্ষিত বন্দী জীবনের পক্ষে নারীর সাহায্য ও সামীপ্য যে কতখানি মারাত্মক তা না বলেও বুঝতে কারও কষ্ট হবে না। বন্দী পুরুষ-মেথর ও বাড়ুদার এদের সেবা করে, বন্দী-পুরুষ এদের জল বোয়ে আনে, আলো যোগায়। তার উপর স্যার নাজিমুদ্দিন বাছাই করা অবাঙ্গালী ব্রহ্মচারীদের সেপাই কোরে এনে এদের পাহারার ব্যবস্থা কোরেছেন সেটাও কিছু নিশ্চয় কোরে জানতে পারা যায়নি যখন। The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy আর কত বক্তৃতা দিবেন? অনেকক্ষণ বলেছেন ত? Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal বাংলাও শিখেছেন নাকি? এত অস্থির হ'য়ে উঠেছেন কেন?)

জেলে যারা যায় তারাই মহা পাপী এ মনোভাব অনেকের থাকতে পারে, কিন্তু আমার নেই। ধরা যারা পড়ে তারাই চোর, ডাকাত, খুনী, বদমায়েস, ধরা না পোড়ে আমরা অনেকেই বাজারে বেশ চোলে যাচ্ছি। চাই কি Assembly র সদস্য হোতেও বাধেনি, কিন্তু চাকা উলটাতে যে খুব বেশী সময়ের প্রয়োজন হয় না—এটাই বা ভুলে লাভ কি? জেলখানার কুষ্ঠির একপ্রান্তে লেখা আছে এবার বাংলার জেলখানার বিভিন্ন শ্রমশিল্পের দরুণ লাভ হয়েছে, ৩,৪৩,৪২০ টাকা। এই শ্রমশিল্পের খাতে, মানুষটানা ঘানীর কথা বাদ যায় নি। ভারতবর্ষের মানুষকে পরের কাজ করবার মধ্যে ইংরাজের স্বার্থকতা, তৃপ্তি এবং বিলাস থাকতে পারে, কিন্তু স্যার নাজিমুদ্দিন তাঁর দেশবাসীকে গরু বানিয়ে সমগ্র জাতির ললাট ফলকে যে দুরপনেয় কলঙ্ক লেপে দিয়েছেন তার মসী-মলীনরূপ তাঁর অন্ধ চোখে কোনদিনই হয়ত পোড়বে না কিন্তু তিনি যেন একথা ক্ষণিকের জন্যেও বিস্মৃত না হন যে জেলের ঘানিতে সর্ষে পিষে তেল পাওয়া যায় না:—যা পাওয়া যায় তা সমগ্র দেশবাসীর উষ্ণ দীর্ঘশ্বাস আর অভিশাপ; সমগ্র মানব জাতীর ধিক্কার, মানব সভ্যতার গ্লানী, নির্যাতিত মানবতার অপমানকাতর রক্তাক্ত ইতিহাস। ঘানীর কথা বোলতে যেয়ে দুঃখের মধ্যে হাসিও পায়। এবার বাজেটে অর্থসচিব দয়া কোরে বন্দীদের রক্তমাখা তেল সপ্তাহে একদিন তাদের পায়ে মাখবার জন্য মঞ্জুরি দিয়েছেন। "গরু মেরে জুতো দান" কথাটা লোকের মুখেই শুনে এসেছি এতদিন, এবারে চাক্ষুস প্রত্যক্ষ কোরে চক্ষুকর্ণের বিবাদ ভঞ্জণ হলো এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে গভর্ণমেণ্টকে সদাশয় না বোলে থাকতে পারছি না। গভর্ণমেণ্ট পশুর ক্লেশ সইতে না পেরে আইন কোরেছেন অনেক, কিন্তু মানুষকে পশু বানানোর এমন বৈজ্ঞানিক নির্মমতা আর কারও নেই।

শব্দটা পড়ে আসছিলাম অনেক দিন। কিন্তু ইংরেজের জেলখানার সঙ্গে পরিচয় হবার পূর্বে শব্দটি সম্বন্ধে যথার্থ ধারণা আমার ছিল না। জনৈক ধার্ম্মিক পণ্ডিত বোঝেছেন যে "Hell" "wal!" "wall" মানে তিনি সঙ্কির্ণতাকেই বোঝাতে চেষ্টা কোরেছেন, কিন্তু আমাদের দেশের প্রাচীরঘেরা স্থানটুকুর মধ্যে শুধু সঙ্কির্ণতাই নেই সর্বদেশের ও সর্বকালের যা কিছু কদর্য্যতা, নীচতা, ও নিষ্ঠুরতা, সব চাক বেঁধে বাস কোরছে। অথচ অতি অল্প আয়াসে এই জেলখানার কত উন্নতি না করা যায়। ইংরেজ সরকারও তাঁর হাতে পড়া এই মস্তিমণ্ডলীর যদি একটুখানি দরদ থাকতো, দৃষ্টির প্রসারতা ও কল্পনার উদারতা থাকতো, দেশের ও দেশবাসীর প্রতি সহানুভূতি থাকতো, আর সঙ্গে সঙ্গে দেশের অসহীন অসহায়দের প্রতি মমতা বোধ থাকতো, তাহোলে বাংলার প্রত্যেকটি জেলখানাকে চার বছরে এক একটি উন্নত শিক্ষাগারে পরিণত করা যেতো। আমার—(Here the time having expired he requested the Speaker to allow him a little more time) সভাপতি মহাশয় আমি ৯ বছর জেলখানায় ছিলাম আমাকে আর তিনটি মিনিট সময় দিন। আমার সময়ের অভাব বোলে সর্বাঙ্গীন গঠন প্রণালী এখানে আমি আলোচনা কোরতে পারবো না। যদি বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট এসম্বন্ধে বিষদ আলোচনা কোরতে চান তবে আমি তাঁদের সাহায্য কোরতে সর্বদাই প্রস্তুত থাকবো। নিম্নলিখিত বিষয়গুলি যদি স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিব গ্রহণ করেন, তবে অচিরাৎ জেলের অন্ততঃ অধিকাংশ দূষিত কদর্য্য আবহাওয়া পরিবর্ত্তিত হোতে পারে:—

(১) অবাঙ্গালী সিপাই পরিবর্ত্তন কোরে উচ্চ শিক্ষিত বাঙ্গালী যুবকদের নিযুক্ত করা।

(২) বাংলার বিভিন্ন জেলে যে ৪,৮৭৮ জন দাগী কয়েদী আছে তাহাদের পৃথক কোরে রাখবার ব্যবস্থা করা।

(৩) নারী কয়েদীর জন্য পৃথক জেলের ব্যবস্থা করা এবং নারী জেলার ও অন্যান্য নারী কর্ম্মচারী নিযুক্ত করা।

(৪) প্রত্যেক জেলে বাধ্যতামূলক শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করা (আমেরিকার জেলে শিক্ষা বিস্তার কোরে আশ্চর্য্য ফল পাওয়া গেছে)।

(৫) অন্ততঃ ৫ বৎসরের মেয়াদী বন্দীদের মধ্যে যে সমস্ত কয়েদী পূর্বে যে যে পেশার উপর জীবিকা নির্বাহ করতো তাহাদের জন্য সেই সেই বিষয়ে বিশেষ শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করা। ২১,১৪৬ জন কয়েদী পূর্বে কৃষক ছিল এবং ২৬৭ কয়েদী যন্ত্রশিল্পের কাজ করতো।

(৬) সশ্রম দণ্ডে দণ্ডিত কয়েদীদের বেতন ব্যবস্থা করা। এবং মুক্তির পর সেই সঞ্চিত মূলধন দ্বারা যাতে তারা শিক্ষাপ্রাপ্ত শিল্পকার্য্যে ব্যবসায়ে নিযুক্ত হতে পারে তারজন্য সাহায্য করা।

(৭) দীর্ঘকালের মেয়াদী কয়েদীদের জন্য ছুটীর ব্যবস্থা করা। রাসিয়ার বাড়ীতে কিছুদিনের জন্য ঘুরিয়া আসার ব্যবস্থা আশ্চর্য্য ফলপ্রসূ হয়েছে। মানুষের স্বাভাবিক চিত্তবৃত্তি, স্নেহ, মমতা ও কর্ত্তব্যের প্রেরণা নিজ পরিজন ও প্রিয়জনের সহিত বিচ্ছেদের পর মিলনের ফলে সজাগ ও বলিষ্ঠ হয়ে উঠে। এবং সাময়িক মানসিক বিকারের উগ্রতা—যা স্বাভাবিক মনোবৃত্তিকে ছাপিয়ে প্রকাশ পায় তা নিস্তেজ হয়ে পড়ে।

(৮) বাঙ্গালী মাত্রই তামাককে নেশার উপাদান না মনে করে—খুব স্বাভাবিক ও অকিঞ্চিৎকর বিলাস জেলেই বোনে করে। এ তার সংস্কারের সঙ্গে ওতপ্রোত জড়ানো। এই স্বাভাবিক চাহিদা

উপেক্ষা ও জুলুমবাজী বন্ধ করতে যেয়ে গভর্ণমেণ্ট অযথা ব্যভিচার, অনাচার ও আরো সহস্রপ্রকারের গ্লানী সৃষ্টি করেছেন। আশু তামাক প্রবর্ত্তনের ব্যবস্থা করা।

(৯) রেডিও এবং প্রতি রবিবার সিনেমার ব্যবস্থা করা। বন্দীর জন্য পৃথকভাবে সিনেমার চিত্র ও উপাখ্যান তৈরী করাতে হইবে।

চোর, ডাকাত ও খুনীরা কেমন কোরে স্নেহের ও প্রেমের স্পর্শে নিমেষের মধ্যে রূপান্তরিত হোয়ে উঠে—কেমন করে বন্দীর অভাবে তার পুত্র, কন্যা ও স্ত্রী দুর্দ্দশার চরম সীমায় দাঁড়ায়—সমাজে লাঞ্ছিত ও অবজ্ঞাত হয়; অন্যান্য দেশের কয়েদীরা কেমন করে জেলের মধ্যে থেকেই শিক্ষায় উন্নত হয়ে ও অর্থকরী বিদ্যায় পারদর্শী হয়ে মুক্তির পর আবার সমাজে শ্রদ্ধা ও সম্মান লাভ করে—এমনি সব উপাদান দ্বারা চিত্রের উপাখ্যান তৈরী করাতে হবে।

(১০) অন্যান্য আমোদপ্রমোদের ব্যবস্থা করা, যথা, indoor games, etc.

সংযুক্তপ্রদেশের গভর্ণমেণ্ট জেলের উন্নতিসাধনকল্পে নিম্নলিখিত বিষয়গুলি প্রবর্ত্তন করেছেন ও করছেন—

১। কয়েদীরা তামাক পাবে এবং এর জন্য খরচ হবে—২৫,০০০ টাকা। জেলের বাগানে তামাক উৎপন্ন হ'তে আরম্ভ হলে খরচ কোমে যাবে।

২। ২টার স্থলে ৩টি করে পাজামা ও কম্বল দেওয়া হবে।

৩। ঘানি উঠিয়ে দেওয়া হবে।

৪। সাধারণ ও রাজনৈতিক—এই শ্রেণীতে কয়েদীদের ভাগ করা হবে।

৫। রাজনৈতিক কয়েদীদের বিলেতের রাজনৈতিক কয়েদীদের মত রাখবার ব্যবস্থা হবে এখন অরাজনৈতিক কয়েদীদেরও ব্যবস্থা হবে উন্নত ধরণের।

৬। একটি কমিটি গঠন কোরে নিম্নলিখিত বিষয়গুলি সম্বন্ধে বিশেষ তদন্ত করা হবে:—

(ক) জেলের শাসনকার্য্য ও পরিচালনা,

(খ) বন্দীদের শ্রেণীবিভাগ,

(গ) বন্দীর করণীয় কাজ ও শিল্প,

(ঘ) অপরাধ ও দণ্ড,

(ঙ) মানসীক অবস্থার উন্নতি,

(চ) স্বাস্থ্য ও চিকিৎসা।

৭। যুক্তপ্রদেশের গভর্ণমেণ্ট দাগী কয়েদীদের সংশোধণের নিমিত্ত ২৫,০০০৲ টাকা বরাদ্দ করেছেন।

**Mr. ASIMUDDIN AHMED:** I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 36,31,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 (Reforms of the Jail Administration).

জেল সম্বন্ধে যা বলবার ছিল আমার পূর্ব্ববর্ত্তী বন্ধুরা সব কথাই বোলে গেছেন। আমি আর আপনাদের মূল্যবান সময় বেশী নিতে চাই না, দু'চারটী কথা বোলেই আমি আসন গ্রহণ করবো। আমি বোলতে চাই—যে মানুষকে জেলে দেওয়া হয়—সে মানুষের সঙ্গে গভর্ণমেণ্টের কোন শত্রুতা

যাইঃ লোকের চরিত্র সংশোধনের জন্যই জেলে দেওয়া হয়। কিন্তু আমরা সচরাচর দেখতে পাই কি? দেখতে পাই যে, তাদের চরিত্র সংশোধন না হয়ে আরো বেশী কলুষিত হ'য়ে তারা জেল থেকে ফিরে আসে। অবশ্য আমি সাধারণ কয়েদীদের সম্বন্ধেই বোলছি। তাদের এইভাবে চরিত্র আরও কলুষিত হবার কারণ, জেলের মধ্যে তাদের নৈতিক চরিত্রের উন্নতি করবার জন্য বা কোনরূপ ধর্ম্মাচরণ করবার জন্য সুবিধা বা সুযোগ কিছু নাই। কোনরকম উপদেশ আলোচনা এবং পড়াশুনার ব্যবস্থা পর্য্যন্ত জেলের মধ্যে নাই। কমিল্লা জেলের মধ্যে আমি কয়েকবার কয়েদী ও কয়েকবার পরিদর্শকরূপে যেয়ে জেল দেখবার সুযোগ পেয়েছিলাম। ঐ সময় দেখেছিলাম আমরা যখন উপস্থিত ছিলাম তখন এক রবিবার দিন একটী মৌলবী সাহেব গিয়েছিলেন জেলে ওয়াজ করবার জন্য কিন্তু আমাদের দেখে মৌলবী সাহেব ওয়াজ না কোরে চুপ ক'রে রইলেন। আমরা তাঁকে কিছু বলবার জন্য অনুরোধ করলাম কিন্তু তিনি কিছুই না বলে আমাদের কিছু বোলতে বল্লেন। তখন আমরা বল্লাম যে, আমরা কি কোরে বলবো। Prisoner যারা তাদের ওয়াজের জন্য আপনাকে বেতন দেওয়া হয়—আমরা কি কোরে বলবো? কিন্তু সে মৌলবী কিছু বোল্লো না। তখন আমাদের মধ্যে মৌলবী মোমতেসর রহমাণ দুইঘণ্টা কাল বক্তৃতা করেন তৎপর ঐ মৌলবী আর জেলে আসে নাই। জেলের সকল কাজই ঐ ভাবেই হয়ে থাকে। কাগজে কলমে সবই আছে কিন্তু কয়েদীরা তার কিছুই ঠিক মত পায় না। পূর্ব্ব Council এর আমলে যারা নাকি জেলের member-in-charge ছিলেন তাঁরাও বোলতেন যেরূপ এবং বর্ত্তমান সময় মাননীয় Minister সাহেব যে জেলের charge এ আছেন তিনিও সর্ব্বদাই বোলে থাকেন যে, জেল শীঘ্রই সংশোধন করা হবে। তাছাড়া যে সকল সুবিধার কথা তাঁরা বলেন সে সব আইনে লিপিবদ্ধ আছে মাত্র যেমন জেলে ইলেকট্রীকের আলো আছে কিন্তু তা সত্ত্বেও কয়েদীরা অন্ধকারেই থাকে, খাদ্য দ্রব্য, চাল, ডাল, তেল, মাছ, মাংস, নুন, এবং পরিচ্ছদেরও উল্লেখ ঠিক আছে, কিন্তু কয়েদীরা খেতে পোরতে পায় না। আসলে বিধান আছে সবই কিন্তু prisoner রা কিছুই পায় না। জেলে দেওয়ার অর্থ যদি মানুষের উপর অত্যাচার করা নয়, তাকে মানুষ কোরে আনাই যদি উদ্দেশ্য হয় তাহলে তদ্রুপ বন্দোবস্ত করা উচিত। যে ডাকাতি কোরে, চুরি কোরে জেলে যায় সে জেলে থেকে বেরিয়ে এসে তাকে পরদিন থেকেই যাতে আবার চুরি, ডাকাতি না কোরতে হয় তার ব্যবস্থা কিছুই নাই। অধিকাংশ চোর ও ডাকাত খাওয়া পরার অভাবের জন্য চুরি ডাকাতি করে। সেজন্য জেলের মধ্যে চরিত্র সংশোধন কোরতে হলে যেমন তাকে ভাল রকম ধর্ম্মশিক্ষা দিতে হবে, কোরাণ পাঠের ব্যবস্থা তার জন্য কোরতে হবে সেই সঙ্গে তাদের নানা রকম শিল্পকার্য্য শিক্ষাদানেরও ব্যবস্থা কোরতে হবে। এবিষয়ে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আমাদের কথা কিছুই শোনেন না। গভর্ণমেণ্টের নিজের জিদই এই গভর্ণমেণ্টের ধ্বংসের কারণ হবে। নৈলে, জেলের দুর্দ্দশার কথা এতদিন ধরে বলা সত্ত্বেও গভর্ণমেণ্ট জেলে কয়েদিগুলি সে বত্যও পায়না, জেলের গাভী গুলি যে বত্যে থাকে। জেলের পোসলখানাগুলি এত খারাপ যে সেখানে মানুষ লজ্জা রক্ষা কোরতে পারে না, স্বাস্থ্য রক্ষা কোরতে পারে না, মনুষ্যত্ব রক্ষা কোরতে পারে না, তারপ্রতি পশুর মতন ব্যবহার করা হয়। কাজেই জেলের ভিতর কয়েদীদের জন্য মশারির কোন ব্যবস্থা নাই। সে যে কি কষ্ট, কলকাতার যে বাসাতে মশা আছে সেই বাসায় আপনারা কেউ যদি এক রাত্রি বিনা মশারী খাটিয়ে শুয়ে থাকেন তাহলে অবশ্যই বুঝেছেন, এই মশারীর অভাবে অনেকে অনেক রোগ হয়ে গেয়েছে। এমনকি আইন অমান্যকারী Political prisoner দের পর্য্যন্ত মশারী দেওয়া হয় না। কিন্তু আমরা বার বার বোলছি যে, কয়েদীদের স্বাস্থ্য-রক্ষা করবার জন্য সর্ব্বাগ্রে

দেওয়া উচিত। সেখানে তারা কাজ করে। কিন্তু খেতে পায় না, ভালভাবে থাকতে পায় না এমনকি দারুণ গরমের সময় একখানা হাত-পাখা পর্য্যন্ত কয়েদীরা পায় না। গরমের চোটে মানুষ যখন উন্মাদের মতন হয়ে যায় তখনও কয়েদীদের ৫ পয়সা দামের একখানা পাখা দেওয়া হয় না। কেউ কেউ এসব কথা শুনে হেসে উঠছেন। কিন্তু আমি জানি যেভাবে গভর্ণমেণ্ট পরিচালিত হচ্ছে তাতে আরো অনেকের ভাগ্যে হয়তো ঐ রকম কষ্ট জুটবে। দেশে যেরকম দলাদলি রোয়েছে তার ফলে C. I, D. র মিথ্যা রিপোর্টে অনেককেই হয়তো জেলে যেতে হবে। এসব কথা এই House এর অনেকে অনায়াসেই বুঝতে পারছেন কারণ আপনারা অনেকে জেলে পোচেছেন। আমাদের মাননীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রসচীবের কাছে মৌলভি মোমেনের রহমান যিনি ঢাকা জেলে যক্ষা রোগে ভুগিতেছেন তাহার মুক্তির জন্য জেল কর্তৃপক্ষের telegram সহ আমরা যে ডেপুটেশন স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিবের নিকট গিয়াছিলাম তাহার অনুমতি অনুসারে ৭৫ সদস্যের স্বাক্ষর যুক্ত এক দরখাস্ত আজ এক মাস হইল করিয়াছি। কিন্তু অদ্য পর্য্যন্ত কোন উত্তর পাই নাই। গভর্ণমেণ্টের লোকদিগকে জেলে মারিয়া ফেলিবার কোন অধিকার নাই (voices and interruption) কোন কোন লোক যে কিছু ভারি বা মোটা হয়ে জেল থেকে ফিরে আসে তাহা জেলের লাপসি অর্থাৎ মাড়ভাত খেয়ে, তাহা না হইলে তাহার রোগা হইয়া জেল থেকে ফিরে আমি বলিতে পারি। মানুষের কেন tuberculosis হয়। জেলে ভালো খাদ্য, স্বাস্থ্য-রক্ষার ভাল ব্যবস্থা ও রোগের শুশ্রূষার বন্দোবস্ত থাকলে ভাল মানুষ কেন জেলে গিয়ে যক্ষা হয়ে মোরছে? তাহলে কেন ঐরকম সব রোগে তাদের জীবন নাশ হচ্ছে। একটী prisoner এর সম্বন্ধে জেল কর্তৃপক্ষ লিখেছেন যে, su pec ed tuberculo is আমরা মাননীয় স্বরাষ্ট্রসচিবকে সে telegram দেখাইয়াছি। প্রায় এক সপ্তাহ গত হলো সে সম্বন্ধে কোন উত্তর প্রত্যুত্তর নাই। মেম্বরগণের কথা তারা শোনেই না। মানুষের অবস্থা একরকম থাকে না। গভর্ণমেণ্টের অবস্থা চিরকাল এইরকম ভাবে থাকবে না। মানুষকে এরকম কোরে মারবার অধিকার গভর্ণমেণ্টের নাই। যদি মানুষকে জেলে রাখতে হয় তাহলে মানুষের মতন কোরে তাকে রাখতে হবে। তাকে জেলে রাখা হবে—তার চরিত্র সংশোধন করবার জন্য তার খাবার ব্যবস্থা উপযুক্তমত কোরতে হবে, তার চিকিৎসার ব্যবস্থা কোরতে হবে, নৈতিক চরিত্রে উন্নতি করবার জন্য যা যা ব্যবস্থা—খবরের কাগজ পড়তে দেওয়া, নামাজের বন্দোবস্ত রাখা, কোরাণ, বেদ ও বাইবেল পড়বার বন্দোবস্ত এই সব কোরতে হবে। এখন সে সব বন্দোবস্ত জেলে বিশেষ কিছু নাই। কাজেই জেল সংশোধন হওয়া উচিত। জেলে এপ্রকার অনেক লোক রয়েছে তাহারা মুক্ত থাকিলে অনায়াসে এই House এ আসিতে পারিতেন। উপস্থিত মেম্বরদের মধ্যেও অনেকে রাজনৈতিক আন্দোলনে ও কৃষক আন্দোলনে জেল ভোগ করিয়া আসিয়াছেন।

(The member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have heard very harrowing accounts of the treatment of convicts in jail. There are some members who have spoken from personal experience, but none of them, though they have been in jail, has cited one single instance of anything happening to him personally which he thought was not right. The mover of the motion cited the case of a suicide that took place 16 years ago, i.e., in 1922. If we look into the

percentage of suicides committed in jails, it will be found that it is far, far below the number of suicides committed in the province as a whole. Sir, I would ask members of this House kindly to consider this question dispassionately and to judge it on the facts that I shall presently place before them. These facts are pertinent and relevant, and I would like hon'ble members to judge this question on the materials that I shall place before them. I do not contest or deny what some hon'ble members have said from their personal experience, but as against that I would like to place before this House certain facts and figures which are, in my opinion, just as important and as relevant for the purpose of considering this question.

But before I do that, I would like to state that we are making every effort to do away with the abuses. We are trying our best to look into the complaints made, and I can assure members of this House that the superior officers of the Jails Department, especially the Inspector-General of Prisons, the Superintendents of Central and District Jails and other officers are now men belonging to our country—Indians—educated men, cultured men, and to expect that these people could be a party to these inhuman atrocities is extremely improbable.

These officers are trying their level best to stop abuses, if any. We are always prepared to look into every complaint that is made. In this connection, I would like the members of this House to consider that we have got our jail visitors and quarterly boards and the non-officials are in the majority in them. They have got all sorts of facilities to inspect the jails, to go and see the conditions under which convicts live, to hear complaints and record their views and complaints, if any, in the jail visitors book. It is quite true that we have heard in this House year in and year out all sorts of complaints, but for reasons unknown, these complaints are not recorded by the non-official visitors. It is very extraordinary that such complaints are not found in the visitors' book. The reason, I may say, is that all these complaints are traditional and a tradition has grown up that this is the way in which prisoners are treated.

Now, Sir, let us take the complaint about "dholai". That is one of the things, if I may say so without offence, which is a myth. We hear about this from time to time and the persons who have been in jails have also heard about it; but up to this time no positive case has ever come up and no complaint have ever been made before the Board during the last 10 or 12 years.

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** How can they make a complaint when on flimsy pretext they are treated with "dholai" process and in this way their mouths are kept shut."

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** But surely some arrangement can be made by the non-official visitors, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Jail, to give protection to the men who will make such complaints. I would ask the House to consider why is it that the non-official visitors do not hear of these complaints.

Again, Sir, I would ask the House to judge with regard to the other complaints which will give an idea of the value of the complaints that are made. I would first place facts about food. If the food is so bad as has been represented by various speakers from the other side of the House that it is uneatable and that it only can be swallowed, then how is it that the majority of the inmates of the jail put on weight.

Then there is something else. Here is some statistics about the death rate in jails in Bengal and in other provinces and the death rate of the province as a whole. I would ask the hon'ble members of the House to judge dispassionately: look at the vast differences in the death rate between those inside the jails and those outside in the same province. In Bengal the death rate of the jail population is 11 per thousand: Assam has got the highest figure of 17 per thousand: United Provinces has got 8 per thousand—the lowest figure: Bihar has got 16 per thousand, the Punjab has got 12·5 per thousand; Madras 10 per thousand; Bombay 10 per thousand and the Central Provinces 12 per thousand. The death rate in the city of Calcutta is 32·6 per thousand and in the whole of Bengal it is 20·5 per thousand.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** It is entirely fallacious and I can demonstrate to you by statistics that it is so; your figure includes children, and 400 children per thousand die every year outside the jail in Bengal.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** As far as expenditure in food in jail is concerned we are spending here more on the diet of the prisoners than is spent in any other province of India. We are spending the highest amount, i.e., Rs. 42 per head per annum and the Central Provinces is spending the lowest, i.e., Rs. 26 per annum. Then again, the quantity of food supplied to the prisoners is sufficient and enough. It is proved by the fact that ordinarily the average convicts cannot consume the quantity of food which is provided and there is always a large surplus.

Sir, I can understand about complaints regarding ill-treatment of the convicts in jails and about non-official visitors not getting correct reports because of further ill-treatment; that is a thing which can be argued. But how is it that these 9 to 12 non-official visitors of jail, men holding responsible position and reliable persons, who get an opportunity of going to jail at any time they like to inspect the food,

do not ever record that the food is bad. I would like again to read the statement of Mr. J. L. Banerji which I did last year——

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURY:** That is known to all of us.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** There are other members who would like to hear and I may read what Mr. Banerji said in this connection:

"I know that many of my friends are ready with sarcastic expressions about the tooth-some character of the lapsi or porridge supplied for morning meals in jails——."

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** On a point of order, Sir. Is the Hon'ble Minister entitled to quote from the same speech and repeat the same thing every year?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Repetition of the same thing in the same speech is not allowed: but I believe, he is quoting from a speech previously delivered.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** He said further—"but speaking deliberately and with a full sense of responsibility I should say that the scale of dietary prescribed for jails is sufficient and generous".

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** May we know how many times he contradicted himself?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Mr. J. L. Banerji had been to prison himself and I think he can speak with authority on the subject.

Now, Sir, as I have said, the hon'ble members on the opposite side of the House have failed to recognise the fact that we have given Division II to all convicted prisoners who have been guilty of terrorist crimes. As far as Mr. Mukuleswar Rahman is concerned he was a Division III prisoner and Government have placed him in Division II. I have enquired about his health and found that there is nothing of alarming nature.

The representation made by the members of the Assembly for his release is still under consideration.

It is a question which cannot be dealt with in a hurry. Therefore I doubt if there is anything serious.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Have not the Government been informed that he is sufferring from suspected T. B.?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** We are all suspected of sufferring from T. B.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Including yourself.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Was there any examination?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes, Mr. Pain who was more personal than anything else and tried sometimes to be humorous at which he failed lamentably, did not tell the members of this House that the ordinary prisoners who went on hunger-strike stated in their petition that they wanted an addition to their food which they were given. They wanted 1 chitak of fish and meat once a week without vegetables. It is from the record that I am speaking. This is in the written petition which they submitted. It is not so much about the food that they complained but the idea behind the demand was that they wanted the same treatment as was accorded to the Division II prisoners and that was the only reason for which they went on hunger-strike.

As I have said in my opening statement we have accepted the policy of giving increased additional representation to the members of this House on the Committee. We are trying to give them every facility to go thoroughly into the administration of jail and suggest reforms and improvements. We are going to have questionnaires distributed not only to the non-official visitors but also to the members of the Legislature and the replies will be considered by us. We will then come up with the result of our investigation to the House. We are anxious to do all that is possible, but the House will have to determine how far they are prepared to go and to what length they are prepared to incur the expenditure. It is the question more or less of pound, shilling, pence or rupee, anna, pie. You can get what you want provided you are prepared to spend the money and therefore I think the best possible means of coming to a decision on the question of jail reform is in the manner that has been suggested by me of giving the members of this House an opportunity to examine it for themselves as non-official visitors of jails and giving them all possible facilities of seeing the administration of the jail work. Replies to the questionnaires will be submitted to them for consideration. Government are

as anxious as any member of this House to improve the condition of jail life, but that can only be done in a systematic manner. We have got innumerable reports on most of the questions that have been raised. They have been considered; the schemes are there, but they have not been put into action, simply because in the past this Government were not in a position to incur the expenditure necessary for the suggested reforms.

We have got religious instructors practically in all big central jails in Calcutta, as a rule, both for Muslims and Hindus and in Calcutta for Christians as well. The facilities for giving the convicts moral lectures are there, but here again a great deal rests on the non-officials and the public at large. The types of men who come forward for this work are not exactly the types of men who will be able to influence the convicts in jail. We want men who will give voluntarily in a missionary spirit some of their time with the convicts and who will try and get into personal touch with the convicts and as far as possible study them and advise them and suggest how they should try to improve.

Then, again, there is the question of jail labour and the question of vocational training. Members of this House, as a rule, suggest vocational training for the convicts, but very few members have come forward with any practical suggestion as to what kind of vocational training would be most suitable. As a matter of fact, at the present time most of the things that are suitable and may be helpful to the type of men who generally go to the jail are there in our jails. Take the question of printing press for the educated type; take the case of tailoring, smithy, ironmongery, weaving and book-binding—all these things are there which give the different types of men who come from the various classes of society an opportunity to learn something that will be useful to them when they come out of jails. Here, again, this is a question which can be gone into further by the non-official visitors in replying to the questionnaries and Government will be only too glad to consider this question.

Last time I spoke on the question of oil pressing. I then said that personally I did not like, I still do not like that, but it has got certain advantages and if we can somehow or other devise some means by which the rigours of it can be minimised it will be all to the good and after examination if it be the general opinion that this is a thing which should be done away with, I am sure that Government will be prepared to do away with this form of labour.

I think I have been able to touch most of the points that have been raised. It is difficult to convince people who are out not to be convinced, who make speeches merely for the sake of opposing the Government——.

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHAYA:** It is very difficult to awake persons who pretend to be asleep.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

I have already said people put on weight there.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** If the Home Minister would spend sometime in jail he would know the conditions prevailing there. (Laughter.)

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I cannot afford to put on any more weight.

Last of all I will advise all members to have a look at my friend Babu Narendra Narayan Chakrabarty who claimed that he spent 9 years in jail, and to say after that if they would still condemn the jail administration.

The motion of Mr. Haripada Chattopadhyay was then put and lost.

The motion of Babu Narendra Narayan Chakrabarti was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed was then put and lost.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The motion (No. 189) does not arise because the 2 lakhs mentioned therein refers to other work and not to the jail budget.

**Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN:** As I have got an opportunity of expressing my views on the subject under discussion, I do not want to move the cut motion that stands in my name. My object is to draw the attention of the Government to certain facts and to place some suggestions before the Hon'ble Home Minister for his careful consideration. The subject under discussion being Jail Administration my first proposition is that jails should be regarded as reformatories and not as penal institutions. This view has been very strongly advocated by the prison authorities in England and arrangements are being made to give effect to it. This views is shared also by many authorities of other countries. Sir, I am a non-official visitor of a Central Jail and as such I come in contact with jail inmates and convicts. I have not much knowledge of the treatment that is meted out to political prisoners because I am a visitor to ordinary jails only. Much has been said about maladministration by the Superintendent of Jails and by other authorities, but, Sir, so far as the ordinary prisoners are concerned I have always heard from them that they have received courteous treatment at their hands. I would

now touch upon two kinds of prisoners who are known as habitual offenders and criminals, and long and short term prisoners. It is necessary to give the House some facts regarding these habitual criminals. A poor illiterate man finding himself unable to maintain himself and his family by honest means—for want of employment commits theft. He is convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for a few days in the first instance. After coming out of jail he again finds himself in the same unhappy position, commits a similar offence and is again sent to jail for a longer period, and every time he goes to the court that dreadful "previous conviction" is added to the charge and the punishment is enhanced. Thus in the course of time this man becomes a terror to the society. Now, Sir, what are the remedies and steps which Government may take to convert him into a peaceful member of the society. There is a society called the Prisoners' Aid Society which is dragging on a miserable existence and is more or less an eye-wash. I therefore suggest that there should be a Government or a Government aided workshop outside where they can employ habitual offenders, but in order to do that these habitual offenders must be given some training while they are serving out their terms of imprisonment. As the Hon'ble the Home Minister has said that he would be glad to have help and advice from the non-official visitors, may I, submit—although I know that there already exist some provisions for training even now—that Government therefore should make adequate arrangements to introduce vocational training in all central and big jails, for instance in weaving, carpentry, book-binding, umbrella-making, machine repairing, smithy, soap-making, choir rope-making, electro plating, etc., etc. This will give two advantages. Government will get its requirements from the jail workshops at a cheap cost and thereby save some money and on the other hand these convicts will get training and find ready employment in these workshops I have mentioned before. The Hon'ble the Home Minister in his introductory speech has spoken of vocational training and has said that a survey has to be made. If a survey be necessary, let there be a survey now and without delay, but I do think that even without a commission or survey some definite steps may be taken. Therefore I appeal to him in the name of humanity to consider the case of these poor prisoners who find so much difficulty in earning their livelihood after they have come out from the jail.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHMY:** May I move, Sir, both the amendments?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No, the last motion does not arise, so you can only move 192. Your last motion has already been discussed in a previous motion.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHMY:** All right, Sir. Then I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 36,31,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100. (Policy of appointing Bengalee Warders in Jails.)

Sir, no useful purpose will be served by pointing out only the dark side of the jail administration and by offering destructive criticisms on this matter. I had a mind to make some constructive criticisms and suggestions to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails. I considered this point when we received a letter from the department inviting us to go and see things for ourselves and we readily responded and some of the high officers of the department showed us round. We thought at the time that the angle of vision and the mentality of the popular Jails Minister might have changed. But I was very much disappointed when the Home Minister rose to reply to some of the constructive suggestions and criticisms offered by some of the members of this House. Sir, I do not agree with the Hon'ble Home Minister on some points but I will make clear point by point, but before that I will request him to consider our view point dispassionately. He has appealed to us to consider these questions dispassionately, we are prepared to do so, but at the same time we want a response from him also in the same spirit. Sir, the question of suicide and other points raised by the Hon'ble the Home Minister will be taken up by me after I make some constructive suggestions, with regard to the Bengalee Warders. If the Hon'ble Home Minister sticks to his reply to the question he gave this afternoon, I have got nothing to say. He said, you, remember, Sir, that in the Police Service armed police and constables are not recruited from Bengalees because of their unsuitability. Sir, I do not agree with him; possibly he will also give a reply in that spirit when I suggest that jail warders should be recruited from Bengalees. If he says that only for the reason of unsuitability he is not going to appoint Bengalee warders in the jails of Bengal, I will at once say that he is committing a very sad mistake. Sir, I know these warders and I shall at once say that these Hindusthani warders are absolute brutes without any sense of humanity, without any sense of morality, and if I may say so without any sense of anything in them. How do they start their lives? They are paid officers of the Government, but can any Superintendent of a Jail or the Inspector-General of Prisons deny that they start their life by teaching the criminals further criminality? I know and I say from my personal experience that they steal *gamchas* from the convicts and in lieu of that they pay them two pice and help the prisoners in bringing tobacco worth two pice, which again that prisoner sells to his comrades at two annas, and in this way, Sir, I know that prisoners accumulate money which goes up to even 27 guineas. I had an occasion to see 27 guineas with a prisoner kept in a pouch made by the prisoner with the help of the medical officer of that particular

jail. I need not give the description of the pouch that was made by the prisoner with the help of the medical officer, by whom of course I do not mean the Superintendent but another medical officer of the jail. Sir, Hindusthanis certainly are suitable with regard to matters of control in the manner as the Government now desire. But I thought that with the advent of the reforms when the jail department would be in the hands of a popular Minister who would be a Bengalee, he would realise not only the position of acute unemployment in Bengal but would also realise that when the prisoners are Bengalees Bengalee warders would know their position, their difficulty and their mentality more than the Hindusthanis, Punjabis, Pathans, Nepalese and Bhutias. I know these Hindusthanis, Nepalese, Pathans, Bhutias are more obedient than the Bengalis. That may be the only defect in the character of the Bengalees and that may be the only hindrance which this department finds in appointing Bengalee warders in jails. I have seen some Bengalee warders in the Alipore Central Jail. They are more amenable to reason and mix with the prisoners as their own and give moral as well as ethical lessons to prisoners not to commit offence any more if they are let out. But these Hindusthani warders, if you permit me to say, not only teach them to steal, but also teach them to do things which are not desired by the Jail Code, they go further and do more heinous things which I do not like to mention in this House. If the Hon'ble the Home Minister sends the Superintendents of these jails to America, Japan and some countries on the Continent, they may be trained in jail administration, they may be trained in the science of crime, and they may understand criminology better than they do now. I will not grudge that for a moment, and if necessary, I can move a motion for sanctioning money that will be required for sending the Superintendents of jails, particularly the Inspector-General of Prisons, to other countries to have lessons with regard to jail administration. Here, Sir, the Superintendents are generally recruited from the Medical Service and sometimes they are recruited from the Indian Civil Service as well. They have no knowledge in criminology, have no knowledge as to how to give practical suggestions to the department with a view to minimise crimes by improving the mentality of criminals. Sir, the increase in crime is due to a large extent to the appointment of warders from other provinces. They obey their superiors no doubt, but their aim and ambition of life is to make money even by remaining inside the jail. For instance, I may mention,—and, nobody can deny, not even the Hon'ble Home Minister himself—that things are smuggled inside the jail from tobacco to opium, ganja and even country and foreign liquor and this is done with the connivance and tacit consent of some of the jail officers. I do not speak of Superintendents and other big officials. How can that become possible? That becomes possible only through these Hindusthani warders——

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Sir, I do not want to take a single minute of the House, but I would request you to examine the point whether it is possible for us to follow the practice of the American House of Representatives of taking written speeches as read and incorporating them as part of the proceedings.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will consider this matter!

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** I should like to have your ruling a bit early, because we have found that we cannot catch your eye——.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am sure, you knew that there was a motion pending. You will have your opportunity——.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** I am not making any complaint, but I am trying to save the time of the House——.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But unless a speech is delivered in the House, it cannot be taken as part of the proceedings.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Sir, it is very difficult to reply to Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemy. Practically what he said last time, he has repeated to-day. So far as the employment of Bengalee warders is concerned, Government have initiated the policy of trying to get more Bengalee warders, and I promise that I will go into this question very carefully and take all possible steps to see that we get more and more Bengalee warders. If we get the right type of men and that in sufficient numbers, our aim should be not to recruit any but Bengalee warders. The question is whether the right type of men would come forward to take up the work. One of the ways in which you can get a better type of men is to offer them better pay. The pay that is now given to the warders—with that you cannot expect educated and better type of men to come and serve as warders. At present the pay is slightly less than that of a constable. Therefore, in all these questions one of the important factors is how far you are prepared to go for the reforms you want and what expenditure you are prepared to incur.

As regards the complaints about smuggling in of various things, I remember reading once in England that Mr. Horatio Bottomley when he was in jail got Champaigne served there in English Jail. So this is a thing which happens everywhere. Our object should be

to check it as far as possible, and one of the best methods of checking it is to get men with higher standard, both as far as education is concerned, and the class from which they are drawn. This is what we are trying to do.

**Mr. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE:** Why not give them smoke?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** That is one of the things we will consider, and we would like the newly formed quarterly boards with more members of this House to make suggestions on this question after examining all aspects.

The motion of Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy that demand under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 36,31,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" was then put and agreed to.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-45 p.m., on Tuesday, the 22nd March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Tuesday, the 22nd March, 1938, at 4-45 p.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 216 Members.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

### Clerks of the Muhammadan Marriage Registrars' offices.

*266. **Mr. MD. ABDUL HAKIM VIKRAMPURI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education (Registration) Department aware of the condition of the clerks of the Muhammadan Marriage Registrars' offices in respect of their pay, security of service, the benefit of provident fund and pension rules?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the desirability of making provisions for their scale of pay, security of service, an old age pension and leave rules?

**MINISTER in charge of the EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq):** (*a*) Clerks or other assistants who may have been employed by the Muhammadan Marriage Registrars are not Government servants.

(*b*) Does not arise in view of the answer to (*a*).

**Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Government has any control over the Marriage Registrars' offices?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The Government has control of inspection, supervision and so forth.

**Mr. SHAHEDALI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Marriage Registrar is a Government officer?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** He is a public servant, and not necessarily a Government officer.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** They are paid by whom?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** They are paid by fees realised.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Who fixes the fees?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Government fixes the rate of fees. There is another kind of fee to which there is no limit.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who appoints these Marriage Registrars?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** They are appointed by Government.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Is there any age of retirement?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** There was none, but I have fixed the age of retirement.

## Admission of Indian Christian girls in the Bethune Collegiate School, Calcutta.

***267. Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that about the end of December, 1937, or the beginning of January, 1938, Mr. Sarasi Kumar Dutt, B.A., an Indian Christian, applied to the authorities of the Bethune Collegiate School for admitting his daughter Miss Madhuri Dutt into Class IX of this institution and though Miss Madhuri Dutt stood first in the admission test of the school and a seat was available in Class IX, she was refused admission on the ground that she is not a Hindu?

(*b*) Is it a fact that in the past Indian Christian girls have been enjoying the privilege of being educated in the Bethune Collegiate School and that this year there is on the rolls of this institution an Indian Christian girl, Miss Mukta Mala Mandal, who is studying in Class IX?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state from what date and year has this rule,

if any, of shutting out non-Hindu girls from admission into the Bethune Collegiate School, came into force?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he has issued any orders for the promulgation of this rule, and if not, the person responsible for the same?

(*e*) If such a rule has been framed recently, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for the introduction of this rule in an institution maintained out of public funds and the reasons if any, for this differential treatment accorded to non-Hindus?

(*f*) If no such rule has been introduced, will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of issuing instructions so that no misunderstanding of a similar nature might arise in future?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes. Miss Mukta Mala Mandal was admitted into the school on 16th January, 1929.

(*c*) The opinion of the Advocate-General which ruled out the admission of non-Hindu girls to the schools, was given on the 4th of February, 1929, but was not communicated to the Principal until the 22nd of November of the same year. It may, therefore, be taken that the 22nd of November, 1929, was the date with effect from which such admissions had been refused.

(*d*) Does not arise in view of the answer to (*c*).

(*e*) and (*f*) I will carefully enquire into the position which seems to have been created by the opinion given by successive Advocates-General.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether all the opinions of the successive Advocates-General have been in favour of refusal of admission to non-Hindu girls?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I believe so. At the present moment the position is that no non-Hindu girl is admitted into the Bethune Collegiate School.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether non-Hindu includes Moslems?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes, Muslim girls are not also admitted.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the legal basis of the opinion of the Advocate-General?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** That is for the Advocate-General to answer.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Bethune Collegiate School is a Government School?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Muslim girls are debarred from getting admission into the Bethune Collegiate School?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question has been answered.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Government thinks it desirable to throw open the school for admission to girls of all castes and communities?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there are any rules for admission of girls?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The Bethune Collegiate School is not governed merely by rules, but by certain Trusts, and the interpretation of the various documents which govern the institution has been given by Advocates-General to the effect that non-Hindu girls cannot be admitted into that school.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether all the expenses of the Bethune Collegiate School are met from the income of this Trust?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Apart from what is got from fees, the expense of running the institution is entirely borne by Government.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the conditions governing the admission are very old, and relate to some Trusts and some provisions in those Trusts, and that at the present moment the Hindu community has no objection to admission of non-Hindu girls in this school?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** There has been no indication given by the Hindu community that they do not object to non-Hindu girls coming in. If I get an indication to that effect, it will strengthen my hands to throw open the school to non-Hindu girls.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Government is prepared to obtain the opinion of the Hindu community on this point?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** If the newspapers which write so much about public affairs will be pleased to say this in the columns of their papers, I will be very much obliged.

**Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if admission of a non-Hindu will entail any disability upon the institution?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Non-Hindu girls will not be admitted. If they want admission, they will be refused.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Miss Mukta Mala Mandal is a Hindu girl or a non-Hindu girl? If she is a non-Hindu girl, how did she get admission?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. That has been given a sufficient reply.

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that Miss Amiyalata Das who was in class VIII in 1934 was admitted after the date mentioned in his reply, that is to say, after the 22nd November, 1929?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Fortunately, I am not aware of that fact.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any Hindu raised any specific objection with respect to the admission of non-Hindu girls in the school in question?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I have said repeatedly that the school is not considered to be open to non-Hindu girls. Whenever a non-Hindu girl will go, she will be refused admission. The Hindu community does not come in.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** Have the Government any objection to ascertain the opinion of the Hindus in this respect, and, if so, what is that objection?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** How can I get the opinion of the Hindus? You can pass a resolution in this House.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Are Brahmo girls eligible for admission in this school?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** That will be for the Principal to decide.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to explain how the Advocate-General came in?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The question arose as to whether the refusal in the case of a certain girl was justified or not. The matter was referred to the Advocate-General and he gave the opinion that under the terms of the Trust and other documents governing the institution non-Hindu girls should not be admitted into the Bethune Collegiate School.

## SHORT-NOTICE STARRED QUESTION.

### Medical administration of the Provinces.

*267A. **Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) What decisions were arrived at the last Conference of Ministers of Public Health at Madras?

(*b*) Were any radical changes suggested in the medical administration of the Provinces?

(*c*) Are the changes proposed likely to improve the efficiency of medical administration and lower the expenditure on this head?

(*d*) If the decisions were accepted unanimously?

(*e*) Have these proposals been submitted to the Secretary of State for India for his consideration for incorporation into the Government of India Act?

**MINISTER in charge of the PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali):** (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*e*) Altogether 14 resolutions were passed at the Conference of Provincial Ministers of Public Health which was held at Madras at the instance of the Minister of Public Health, Madras. At the request of the Madras Government three of these resolutions are being treated as confidential. Copy of the remaining eleven resolutions is laid on the table.

(*d*) Yes.

*Eleven of the 14 resolutions passed at the Conference of Provincial Ministers of Public Health held in Madras.*

*Resolution No. 4.*—This conference recommends the appointment in larger numbers, wherever practicable, of independent medical practitioners as honorary teachers and professors in teaching institutions and as honorary surgeons and physicians in hospitals owned and managed by the State.

*Resolution No. 5.*—This conference agrees that rural medical relief should be extended to all villages.

*Resolution No. 6.*—This conference of Public Health Ministers is of opinion that in the interests of medical relief in the country, it is absolutely necessary that the manufacture in India of drugs, biological products and hospital equipment should be encouraged in all possible ways by the Provincial Governments and that before any such product is put on the market, it shall be properly tested and certified to be of standard quality by an authority to be constituted by the Provincial Government, if necessary, by legislation.

*Resolution No. 7.*—This conference is of opinion that it is desirable that there should be one uniform standard of medical education throughout the whole of India and that attempts should be made to realise this ideal as quickly as possible consistent with the circumstances prevailing in each individual province, provided further that the standard of university education should under no condition be lowered.

*Resolution No. 8.*—This conference is of opinion that it is desirable that Rural Medical Officers should have a post-graduate course both in theory and practice on public health so as to enable them to discharge efficiently their duties as Sanitary Officers.

*Resolution No. 9.*—This conference attaches the greatest importance to the supply of pure drinking water in rural areas.

*Resolution No. 10.*—This conference recommends investigation with regard to health conditions of the people by means of health survey as conducted in the province of Madras under the "Poonamalle Health Unit Scheme" and recommends its adoption by all Provincial Governments.

*Resolution No. 11.*—This conference recommends that it is highly desirable in the interest of efficiency in the medical profession that a refresher course should be made obligatory on all medical employees of State and local bodies including rural subsidised practitioners.

*Resolution No. 12.*—This conference of Public Health Ministers is of opinion that it is desirable that laboratories should be established and maintained for the free examination of clinical material in all suspected cases of infectious diseases sent to the laboratories by registered medical practitioners.

*Resolution No. 13.*—This conference is of opinion that it is highly desirable in the interest and safety of the public that medical education in whatever system may be, should be standardised and no one who has not attained certain standard of medical education should be allowed to practise.

*Resolution No. 14.*—All employees under the Provincial Government to be recruited henceforth should be given clearly to understand that the benefits now enjoyed by the employees will be withdrawn from them and that they would not be entitled to free medical treatment.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister kindly inform the House if the Government of Bengal is thinking of giving effect to the last 11 resolutions, and, if so, when?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Government propose to take suitable action at the appropriate time on all these resolutions.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** With regard to my question (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister kindly inform the House if any steps have been taken to place the recommendations of that Conference before the Secretary of State in view of the fact that many of the rules enforced by the Secretary of State are not included in the original Government of India Act?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, I think I cannot add to what I have already stated.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** Has the attention of the Hon'ble Minister been drawn to the fact that at present, the rules governing the Indian Medical Service contain serious differential treatment to the detriment of Indians?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The latter part of the question involves an expression of opinion and I submit, Sir, I am not called upon to express any opinion on the rules. The rules are framed by the Secretary of State under, I think, section 246 of the Government of India Act, and we are bound by the rules so framed.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** May I ask the Hon'ble Minister if these rules really operate to the detriment of Indian members in the Service?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The Act gives power to the Secretary of State to frame rules for safeguarding the interests of Service men, and in exercise of those powers, the Secretary of State framed those rules. It is for the hon'ble members to interpret the rules

according to their own liking, and this involves an expression of opinion.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** In order to effect both economy and better efficiency in Service, has the Hon'ble Minister considered the advisibility of considering whether the administrative portion of such posts, such as the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals and the Inspector-General of Prisons, can be entrusted to members of the Bengal Civil Service, and the part of special Advisors to Government can be better played by the appointment of a Committee of Honorary Specialists whose numbers, however, are quite sufficient in Calcutta?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, I have been called upon to express an opinion on various points, but I may tell the House at once that in my opinion the All-India Service seems to be inconsistent with Provincial Autonomy (hear, hear, from the Congress Benches) but so long as the law is there and the rules are there we have got to be guided by the rules on the subject.

**Dr. J. M. DAS GUPTA:** Within the framework of the rules, will the Hon'ble Minister kindly inform the House if he has tried to find out if our district towns have a sufficient number of qualified men, even men with specialised knowledge, and if he has done so it will make the necessity of retaining the post of Civil Surgeons almost uniformly superfluous?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Government of Bengal or the Hon'ble Minister in charge who attended this Conference on behalf of the Government of Bengal, did commit himself or the Government to any proposal contained in these resolutions involving a set-back on the policy of Indianization of the Services and a set-back on the control of the Provincial Ministers on the Services?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am sorry to say that the question involves a good deal of matter which does not appear anywhere in the answer and I submit most respectfully that this question does not arise.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of order. I did ask a specific question arising out of these resolutions and that question was simple, whether in course of these resolutions adopted, and other resolutions though they were held back on the ground that they were of a confidential nature and therefore, not placed before us, I wanted to

know whether in view of these confidential things not placed before us there is any commitment of the Minister on behalf of the Government of Bengal in regard to the two vital matters—Indianization of the Services and control of the Ministers over Provincial Services.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You can only ask questions arising out of the answers given.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** These things are not given in the answer. I want simply some information about these vital matters. It arises out of these resolutions.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You can ask about the resolutions published.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that the Madras Government has given effect to resolution No. 4?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think the Madras Government have given effect to a certain extent to resolution No. 4, and this Government has also given effect to that.

**Mr. C. MORCAN:** With refrence to resolution No. 6 laid on the table, does not the Government of Bengal now propose to bring in legislation for the manufacture of drugs in India and for marketing the same, i.e., whether they have in contemplation any such legislation?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The whole matter is under the consideration of Government.

**Proposed adjournment motion.**

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Sir, as desired by you last evening, I submit that I intend to place before you more important facts with regards to the adjournment motion I proposed yesterday.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Is there any written statement?

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** A small statement, Sir, and I am sure that that will help you in forming your opinion that the matter proposed to be discussed is in order, and is a matter of urgent public importance. The fact is here, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Let me see.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of order, Sir. You were pleased to rule that questions not arising out of the reply could not be put by me, but immediately after Mr. George Morgan put a question which had nothing to do with the reply and you allowed him. May I know why you allowed him to put his question?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Because Mr. Morgan's question referred to resolution No. 6.

(At this stage Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy rose in his seat.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes, Mr. Hashemy, what is the new fact that has emerged? I can say this much very frankly that unless I am fully satisfied I am very reluctant to obstruct the normal business of the House. But I would appeal to the member if he may not desist from discussing matters which may have some communal complexion. I am not exercising my powers just now, but I am appealing to the members that in a matter which may be given a communal colour, before I hold it in order or not, they will be so good as to consider whether it is not desirable, in the interests of the very harmony that we all desire, to discuss this matter out of the House with the Hon'ble Minister in charge.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Will you, Sir, address this appeal to the members on your right?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am appealing to the right, to the left, and to the front (laughter) to do their level best to avoid anything that might engender communal ill-feeling, and I hope that, in view of my appeal, Mr. Hashemy will reconsider his position and not press this motion.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** It is far from my mind, Sir, to do anything which might embitter the relations between the various communities. What we want to ventilate is that the police ought to help us and not assault us when there is trouble and when we try to pacify the contending parties. If the Hon'ble Home Minister will give us an assurance that, in such cases in future where there is an apprehension of a communal riot breaking out, the police will not assault us, i.e., members of the public, but will rather help us in pacifying the parties, then I shall be glad not to press my motion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is quite all right.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Your appeal, Sir, ought certainly to be listened to. But the word "communal" has several connotations. It may be that what you think to be communal may be

considered by us to be bare justice. In such circumstances, I submit that to rule out a problem, on which the whole future of India depends, would be rather dangerous to our future progress towards amity and concord. I would, therefore, appeal to you in my turn to let this House discuss matters freely and even with warmth, so that we may ultimately arrive at an amicable settlement of the many problems that confront us.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have explained at the very beginning that if Mr. Hashemy insists on his rights, then I must consider his motion on its merits. I am not shutting out any member from moving an adjournment motion, but I am only making an appeal.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Sir, I would like to hear what the Hon'ble Home Minister has got to say in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Sir, I might inform the honourable member that Government have taken action in the matter, and the constables concerned have been suspended.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** In view of the action, Sir, taken by Government I do not propose to insist on moving my motion.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Sir, may I move the motion for the adjournment of this House, of which I have given notice?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Probably Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, you are aware of the fact that during the last session I drew the attention of members of the House, including yourself, to the fact that when notice of an adjournment motion is given, not only the motion should be there but it should be accompanied by a statement of the case. In the present case, I find that there is no such statement, and as such I must hold that this motion is out of order. I am sorry to find that I have to rule it out of order even though I had given my consent. But that is the consequence of the rule as it stands.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Does the rule require that a detailed statement of the case should be there, over and above a succint statement?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You will find that it is laid down in section 107 that a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed must be furnished, and the mover must annex thereto the consent of the Speaker in writing. So, you are asking for leave to move this motion. Is not that so?

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Where is the written statement required to be given after the consent has been furnished? The facts of the case are not there.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** As far as I am aware, Sir, this is the manner in which adjournment motions have been admitted before.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That may have been the case in the days of the old Bengal Legislative Council, but you will remember that under the new rules I had to rule out two adjournment motions tabled by members on my left on the ground that no written statement accompanied the notice of motion. You will find that in the proceedings.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I submit, Sir, one point, viz., that the whole interpretation must depend on how the motion was framed? If the motion is framed in such a way as to make the subject-matter to be discussed sufficiently clear, I submit, Sir, that there is nothing obligatory in the section which requires a separate written statement beyond the motion itself. It all depends on whether the motion is sufficiently and clearly worded to give a proper clue as to the object of the motion. In that case, it might be held that the written statement is contained in the motion itself.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think that is a very good point which you have raised. I am prepared to consider such a case and waive the technical objection to the written statement not being attached if I find that the motion itself contains such details as are necessary for the written statement itself. Mr. Tamizuddin wants to adjourn the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, to wit, the unjustified arrest of a Proja Leader and Muslim spiritual guide Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish in the Natore subdivision on or about the 18th March, 1938. No details have been given as to under what section he has been arrested, in what stage the case now is, and such other details. If these facts were there in the motion itself, then I would certainly have been prepared to consider the motion on its merits and waive the technical objection. I do hold that in the present case I shall not be justified in interpreting this section in any other way than I have done, because the facts are not there.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I am afraid that it will be out of order on another ground also, viz., that the case is *sub judice*.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Exactly so. That is what I was also going to say.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Sir, without wasting further the time of the House, may I know that if I submit to you a written statement of the facts of the case, will you be prepared to admit my motion?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Then I will certainly consider the matter on its merits.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** Is it your ruling, Sir, that besides the motion there should be a separate written statement?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Ordinarily.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "38—Medical."

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 50,92,500 be granted for expenditure under the head "38—Medical."

Sir, the total provision in the budget under discussion under the head "Medical" is Rs. 58,92,000, of which is 7,99,500 is charged, and the balance, viz., Rs. 50,92,500, which is to be voted, is the subject-matter of the present demand.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I hope that you will be brief, because you have two demands to finish to-night. In order that members may get an opportunity to speak I hope that you will try to be as brief as possible.

How long will you take to finish your speech?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think I will take about 15 minutes.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** We are following a time-table and we have got to finish two subjects to-day; in order to give full opportunity to the members, I would request you to be as brief as possible.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I will not enter into details but will give only a bird's eye-view of the entire situation and leave the entire matter to the House for discussion.

Sir, the actual expenditure during the last three years has been as follows:—

| | | Rs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1934-35 | ... | 48,21,000 |
| 1935-36 | ... | 48,19,000 |
| 1936-37 | ... | 49,44,000 |

Revised estimate for 1937-38 is Rs. 52,56,000 and the provision in the present budget is Rs. 58,92,000. The increase, it will

appear, is Rs. 6,36,000. This increase has been accounted for at pages 98-99 of the Red Book and the details of the new expenditure have all been noted there and I do not think, I shall be justified in drawing attention to it in detail in my speech.

Now, Sir, I think I can begin at once by stating that my statement will be supplementary to the statement made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister at the presentation of the budget; nor do I think I shall be justified in entering into details, but I think I can add a word or two by way of explaining or amplifying the principles underlying these grants. I would like to state in brief the present policy that has been followed up to date and the policy that the present Government propose to follow in future. Now, Sir, the policy followed hitherto may be summed up shortly thus. Government undertook responsibility for the medical attendance and treatment of all Government employees except ministerial employees in Calcutta who are not entitled to medical attendance but are entitled to free medical treatment.

Secondly, Government maintain a medical service mainly for administrative purposes. Services rendered by the subordinate staff of this medical service in medical institutions maintained or managed by local bodies had to be paid for by way of contribution by these local bodies.

Thirdly, Government maintain a number of teaching institutions which supply the officers for Provincial Medical Service. Hospitals are necessary adjuncts to these medical institutions for teaching, but here again Government do not maintain all these hospitals. It is only 4 out of these hospitals that are maintained at State cost, namely, the Medical College Group of Hospitals, the Hospitals attached to the School of Tropical Medicine, the Hospital attached to the Campbell Medical School and the Mitford Hospital at Dacca and the rest of the hospitals attached to the medical institutions are maintained by local bodies.

Coming to the question of nursing, I think the honourable members of this House know thoroughly well that there is practically nothing in the nature of nursing staff in the mufassil hospitals. The same may also be said perhaps with regard to the Campbell Hospital and even in the case of the Medical College Hospital to a certain extent. It has been said that the nursing arrangement there too is neither sufficient nor satisfactory. In fact, complain has been made that the nurses are required to work for much longer period than is consistent with their health and consistent with good nursing. Up till the year 1922, all these things used to be done by, and practically the entire responsibility for medical relief were on the shoulders of, the local bodies and the generous public. But it was in the year 1922, and the credit, mainly, if not entirely is due to Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee of revered memory, who placed some responsibility on the provincial revenues for medical relief. He it was who introduced the system of State aid to medical

institutions started and maintained by the local authorities and also by private bodies or individuals. The first provision, I understand, for this purpose was made in the year 1923 and the amount was Rs. 15,000. Gradually it rose and in the current year it is Rs. 1,20,000 and for the next year (1938-39) the provision is Rs. 1,30,000. It is evident from this that the policy hitherto followed has been that the main responsibility rested with the local bodies and with the generous public and Government went to the extent of helping the deserving institutions under certain conditions. The conditions also were not very liberal. I do not think I have much time to enter into details on this point. Government have considered this matter very carefully and while recognising that no Government in the world have or can possibly take the responsibility for the treatment and cure of the sick out of the population entrusted to its care and without in the least minimising the responsibilities of the local bodies and also the necessity of public philanthrophy in the matter of medical relief, Government feel convinced that the contribution of Government to medical relief ought to be much more than what has been done in the past. With this object in view Government in the Department of Public Health have prepared a scheme of medical relief and public health reorganisation involving an ultimate additional recurring expenditure of several lakhs of rupees, the details whereof are now being examined carefully and it is expected that when this scheme will be given effect to in co-operation with the local bodies and with the philanthrophic public, it will make medical relief easily available to every remote village in the rural areas of Bengal and the object of Government in providing suitable centres of medical relief will be fulfilled at no distant a date. This, I think, is the policy which I should like to place before the House.

Coming to the individual grants or provisions that have been made in the budget, I may say at once that they are in the nature of an earnest indicative of the policy that Government intend to follow in future. In the first place, so far as nursing is concerned I can state at once that Government have provided a sum of Rs. 2,86,000 for a scheme which has been approved for the purpose of training Indian nurses in the Campbell Medical School. It is expected to have a far-reaching consequence in the matter of the medical administration in the country. In this connection I may say at once that the Anglo-Indian community have so long rendered conspicuous and unique service in the matter of nursing and there need not be any apprehension on the score of the provision for the training of Indian nurses, because it cannot be expected that the entire demand for the nursing profession in the Province can be met by that community. Furthermore, circumstanced as we are, we should take into consideration the present social structure of our country. It can very well be considered whether that community will not continue to render the service of the nursing profession for a pretty long time to come.

The only other thing in this connection that deserves some sort of mention is the provision of Rs. 3 lakhs for the improvement of Sadar dispensaries. There is a proposal for abolition of the practice of requiring contribution for services rendered by the subordinate medical staff in the medical institutions maintained by local bodies. It is a proposal only but it has not been finally accepted.

There are other provisions relating to Tuberculosis Hospital and Climatic Sanitarium. With regard to this latter, I think I can make this statement that Government have decided definitely to have a Climatic Sanitarium established in Bengal at the best available site in Bengal irrespective of considerations of cost. I can further enlighten this House——

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Has any money been provided?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Yes; Rs. 1 lakh has been provided.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** You cannot have it with Rs. 1 lakh.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** You cannot spend more than that amount in a year.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** How can you spend more than Rs. 1 lakh in a year. However, I hope, Dr. Sanyal will allow me to speak and after that he can have his say.

As far as the selection of the site is concerned, I may enlighten the House that that matter also is practically nearing completion and I hope to be able to come to a decision shortly on this point.

Then there is the provision with regard to the Jadavpur Hospital of Rs. 1,36,000 which is necessary for acquisition of land for the further extension of that hospital.

I need only incidentally mention the provisions with regard to the better nutrition of tubercular patients who are treated in the mufassil hospitals and also better provision for treatment in the mufassil hospitals. There is a provision for a Maternity Hospital called "Sishu Mangal Pratisthan" of a sum of Rs. 49,000 for building purposes and there are other provisions also for the same purpose. I do not think I need take more time of the House.

With these remarks I commend my motion to the accepance of the House.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If there is no intention of pressing any of these motions to a division, I think it would be better if the members speak on all their motions, because I find I will probably have to close this

debate at 6-15 and adjourn the House for 15 minutes for prayer. After prayer, we will take up Public Health for which an hour and a half has been allotted. As there is so short a time, I hope the House will accept the suggestion that only 5 minute's time be allowed to each speaker.

**Maulana MD. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI:** I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 50,92,500 under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100.

মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, Medical বিভাগের Minister-in-charge 50,92,500 rupees এর grant এই Medical বিভাগের জন্য মঞ্জুরী চাইয়াছেন। যেহেতু মফস্বলের বহু হাসপাতালে ও ডিসপেন্সারিতে দীন-দরিদ্র রোগীদের নিকট হইতে ঔষধের মূল্য গ্রহণ করা হয়, ইহার প্রতিবাদ স্বরূপ ঐ demand হইতে ১০০৲ টাকা কমাবার জন্য আমি এই প্রস্তাব আনিয়াছি। পৃথিবীতে যত সুসভ্য গভর্ণমেণ্ট আছেন, সেই সকল গভর্ণমেণ্টের যত বিভাগ আছে, তন্মধ্যে Medical বিভাগ অত্যন্ত প্রয়োজনীয় ও পবিত্র, এবং উহা সভ্যতার উজ্জ্বল নিদর্শন। মানবজীবনের মধ্যে মানুষের যত রকম সুখ এবং সম্পদ হইতে পারে, তন্মধ্যে স্বাস্থ্যই হইতেছে সর্বাপেক্ষা প্রধান সম্পদ। এই স্বাস্থ্যের উন্নতি-বিধান এবং স্বাস্থ্য রক্ষার জন্যই Medical বিভাগের সৃষ্টি। হাসপাতাল হইতে যাঁহারা ঔষধ নেন ও ব্যবহার করেন, তাঁহারা সচরাচর গরীব ও দীন-দরিদ্র। যাঁহাদের অবস্থা ভালো ও স্বচ্ছল, তাহারা নিজেরা দোকান হইতে ঔষধ ক্রয় করিয়া ব্যবহার করিয়া থাকেন। যাহারা দীন-দরিদ্র, যাঁহারা ঔষধ ক্রয় করিতে পারেন না, ঔষধ ক্রয় করিবার শক্তি-সামার্থ্য যাহাদের নাই, তাহারাই সরকারের আউটডোর ডিসপেন্সারির স্মরণাপন্ন হইয়া থাকেন। তাঁহাদের নিকট হইতে যে ঔষধের মূল্য গ্রহণ করা হয়—আমার মতে ইহা অত্যন্ত নিষ্ঠুর প্রথা। যাঁহারা হাসপাতালের সিট ভাড়া দিতে পারেন এবং ভাড়া দিয়া spocial সিট গ্রহণ করিতে সমর্থ তাঁহাদের সম্বন্ধে আমার কিছু বলিবার নাই। কারণ তাঁহারা charge দিতে সক্ষম। এখন যদি বলা হয়—যে, হাসপাতালের ব্যয় নির্বাহ করা সম্ভব নয় বলিয়া তজ্জন্য গরীবদের নিকটও ঔষধের মূল্য চার্জ করা হয়। তাহা হইলে উত্তরে আমি বলিবো, ব্যয় সঙ্কোচ না করিয়া গরীবের ঘাড় মটকাইবার প্রয়োজন কি? যাঁহারা হাসপাতালের ডাক্তার তাঁহারা যে মোটা বেতন পান তদতিরিক্ত private চিকিৎসা করিয়াও তাঁহারা বহু টাকা পাইয়া থাকেন। যদি তাঁহাদের বেতন হইতে সামান্য কিছু cut করা হয়, যথা যিনি ৫০০৲ টাকা মাহিয়ানা পান তাঁহার বেতন হইতে যদি ৫০৲ টাকা কিম্বা ১০০৲ টাকা cut করা হয় তাহা হইলে তাঁর কি আসে যায়? এক দিকে মোটা বেতন পান, অন্যদিকে private practice এর দ্বারা আরো অধিক অর্থোপার্জন করেন, তাঁদের প্রতি এত দয়া দেখাইবার প্রয়োজন কি? আর অনর্থক ব্যয় বাহুল্য করিয়া ট্যাক্সের উপর ট্যাক্স বসাইবার প্রয়োজন কি? শিক্ষার উপর ট্যাক্স বসিয়াছে, কোর্ট ফিঃ, ষ্ট্যাম্প, ইলিকট্রিক ও আমোদ-প্রমোদে ট্যাক্স বৃদ্ধি পাইয়াছে, এখন ঔষধের উপর তথা স্বাস্থ্যের উপর কর চাপান হইতেছে, ইহা অপেক্ষা নিষ্ঠুর আচরণ আর কি হইতে পারে? আমার মনে হয়, House এর সকল মেম্বরের একমত হইয়া এই নিষ্ঠুর প্রথার প্রতিবাদ ও উচ্ছেদ সাধন করা একান্ত কর্তব্য। অতএব এই নিষ্ঠুর প্রথার প্রতিবাদ স্বরূপ Medical demand এর টাকা হইতে ১০০৲ টাকা cut করিবার জন্য আমি যে প্রস্তাব করিয়াছি—আশা করি ইহাতে আমি আপনাদের সকলের সমর্থন পাইব।

**Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 50,92,500 under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100 (policy and inadequacy of the provision for rural Bengal).

Sir, in moving this motion, I may mention that I myself am a medical man. I served the Government for about 10 years. I have experience of private service as well, and I have been practising independently for the last 30 years in a mufassil town, having been very closely in touch with the villages and thereby having experience of the actual state of things of theirs. I will not and cannot say anything by imagination. I will say what I see every day.

To live as a man one must have good and sufficient food in the first instance. After that we must see that diseases are prevented so far as possible, and in the third instance we must find means to cure diseases which cannot be prevented. The Medical Department is the curative department and the prevention is an alien department. If a man gets good food and health to live on, then only he will require education, industries and all that for perfection of human existence. The total population of the province of Bengal is 5 crores and odds with one lakh of villages in it, and with 6,000 union boards to do some rural uplift work. Of the whole population about 90 per cent. are agriculturists who, with their poor income, can hardly make both ends meet. The percentage of the well-to-do men will not exceed 1 or 2 per cent., who can barely look to their own needs, but the rest are practically helpless. Although they, with their honest labour, feed the whole population yet there is nobody to see to their grievances. To be frank their existence has become a mere apology. For a subject nation, the relation with the State is very responsible and serious. The State is both morally and legally bound to look to the welfare of the nation. A State is religiously responsible for scarcities, famines, epidemic and deaths thereby of a country over which it is supposed to administer. The total number of qualified medical practitioners of Bengal is about 12,000 of which 2,179 serve under the Government and Local Funds, a part of which are honorary as reported in the Administration Report of 1935. The number of dispensaries including rural and urban was 1,342 of which the number of rural dispensaries was only 749, some might have increased during the last 3 years. The number of dispensaries in the rural constituencies in comparison with the population is miserably poor. The total number of patients treated indoor in the mufussil was 90,191 only and outdoor 9,673,276. From this it is imprudent to infer that this was the sum total of all the patients of rural areas. The number of dispensaries being scattered and situated in distant areas there are lakhs of patients who with all their desire and attempt cannot possibly get the help of such dispensaries. The number of beds in the rural and urban dispensaries was only 6,067 at

the end of 1935, hence the poor patients who require treatment as in-patients do not find sufficient accommodation. Moreover, it has been seen particularly in the urban hospitals that many of the available beds have been made paying in order to put a check on the influx of helpless patients and for increase of income. The stock of medicines and the accessories in rural dispensaries and hospitals is miserably insufficient and on this account all the medical officers find difficulties in treating the patients that come in.

In the urban dispensaries and hospitals a stock of medicine is kept separately as "civil stores" for the use of the Government officials who are eligible to get free treatment, but the quantity of the stock being poor and the demand of such officials being great, they always use up their own stock and encroach upon the general stock, so much so that the actual poor patients are deprived of their own dues. I have experiences that the district officials—even those who are highly paid and not eligible to free treatment—get all their prescriptions served in the charitable dispensaries, making the medical officers very much embarrased thereby. It is a pity that they do not feel shy to get the supply of phenyle and such necessaries for their daily use from such dispensaries. A check to this mal-practice should at once be made.

The practice of the "Nadia" system of accepting a fee of one anna for new patients and ½ anna for old patients, existing in many dispensaries both rural and urban,—although it fetches a little income and although the rate is very moderate, is a burden to many. It is said that the medical officers in charge have the discretion to exempt those who are unable to pay, but as they are called upon for an explanation when the income falls short they cannot use their honest discretion and this fee is supposed to be an unpleasant taxation on many. If this system is stopped the actual poor will be much benefitted and the number of patients will be increased. The district hospitals and dispensaries at least should be well equipped with stocks of medicines and surgical instruments and efficient men with surgical ability should be put in charge of them. I know of many instances when emergency cases were refused admission and were advised to go to Calcutta or to any such distant hospital. This really is a disgrace. Many cases of strangulated hernia, appendicitis and intestinal obstruction which should get immediate treatment in the nearest hospital die without treatment like cats and dogs.

With the progress of science X-ray and Biological laboratories have become an essential necessity. There are many districts where there are no laboratories and X-ray installation is a rare thing in the mufassil. I suggest that every district hospital, if not more, should be equipped with both of these with expert men in charge. If the appointment of

specialised men may seem costly, local practitioners may be given training and appointed with a small honorarium, or free.

The spread of tuberculosis has become a terror in the countryside. This fell disease is sweeping away valuable young lives every day. The treatment of these is so expensive that most of the patients cannot get treatment for want of funds. The special hospitals the number of which is so meagre have no arrangements for treating poor patients free. Immediate steps should be taken in this matter. As this disease is spreading mainly owing to lack of prophylactic steps arrangements should be made at once to educate men in this subject and statutory steps should be taken for segregation of suspected T.B. patients in order to put an end to this undesirable spread so far as possible. In this way leprosy is on the increase in Bankura and Birbhum and I beg to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to this as well. Opening of dispensaries if possible in every union or if not in every union at least in every two unions should be compelled by helping with grants to save the dying nation.

(The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. DAMBER SINGH GURUNG:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, while discussing the policy of the Government in connection with the Medical Department, I would like to concentrate myself to one very important point only which affects not only the district of Darjeeling but the whole of Bengal. We find in the budget that the Government has made a provision of one lakh of rupees for the establishment of a climatic T.B. Sanatorium in Darjeeling. So far I understand this sum is simply to supplement the donation of Rs. 2,82,000 given by Mr. Ram Kumar Bangur in 1935, for the establishment of a T.B. Sanatorium. I don't know whether the donor gave this amount for a sanatorium or a climatic sanatorium. But whenever any one gives donation for a charitable purpose, I think he gives specially for the benefit of the poor class of people. I doubt very much whether a sanatorium in Darjeeling will benefit the poorer classes of people at all. Living in Darjeeling is very expensive, the journey expense too is quite high and so far as I understand the charges in the sanatorium will not be less than Rs. 40. Under these circumstances, I doubt whether the poor class of people can afford to go up there. As regards the hill people, I am sure that no one can afford to pay Rs. 40 and stay in the sanatorium. After all it will simply benefit the rich people which, I think, is not at all the desire of the donor. The rich people can go anywhere in the world for treatment.

Another point, Sir. I do not understand why it should be a climatic sanatorium in the hills. Doctors, expert in the treatment of T.B. patients, are of opinion that climate is not an essential factor for

the treatment of T.B. patients. In this booklet by Dr. Kumud Sankar Roy, M.A., B.Sc., M.B., etc., I find that Dr. Leon Petit has said: "We are now-a-days convinced that there is no climate, however, favoured which can cure consumption." Dr. Walter says, "It is of greater importance than the climate is, the use that is made of it." Consumptives have been cured in most unlikely climates and many things point to the conclusion that fresh air and proper medical supervision are of much greater importance than a fine climate. Dr. Arthur Lathan says, "All patients should be treated under the same climatic condition as those which they are likely to experience in their subsequent life."

So I do not understand why the Government, rather the medical adviser to the Government, is laying so much stress on climate neglecting the most important point, that is, whether the sanatorium will be easily accessible to the people and whether it will benefit the poorer classes of people which, I presume, is the desire of the donor. So if the Government really desire to look to the interest of the people they should try to find out some place preferably near Calcutta or why not give this whole amount to Jadabpur Tuberculosis Hospital which is doing a very good work. They are in need of 4½ lakhs of rupees, but the Government have given only Rs. 1,36,000. Instead of frittering away money little here and little there, it would be much better if the Government would concentrate its attention to one which is very badly in need of funds and make it an ideal sanatorium and then extend to some other place or if the Government really wants to have a climatic sanatorium in the hills, there is already one in Kurseong started by Rai Bahadur S. B. Dey. I think it would be much better to help this sanatorium and extend it, if necessary, and to wait and see how this climatic sanatorium works instead of doing the injustice of forcing something on the people which they do not want at all.

The Government is quite aware of the fact how very vehemently the people of Darjeeling, particularly the public of Kalimpong, when a site was selected there, protested in several mass meetings in some of which Sir B. P. Singh Roy, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department, was present and submitted memorials to His Excellency. When the Birkmyre site was selected the tenants of the development area submitted a separate memorial to His Excellency. It was in 1919 when the tenants, the hill people of the development area, were driven out from there and nearly 4 square miles of land was acquired and it was declared by the Government that it would be open for residential purposes. If a T.B. sanatorium is established anywhere in Kalimpong now, the Government will be deceiving the public by attracting them to invest lots of money in buildings and other properties. It will be certainly a question of life and death to our people. The hill people are very very susceptible to this disease. It will affect

not only the people of Kalimpong but the whole of Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet as Kalimpong is the centre of wool trade from Tibet. Thousands of Tibetans come to Kalimpong every year and these are the people who will be affected most on account of their dirty habit of living. This disease will spread like wild fire throughout the district. Government gives us an assurance that they will take every care not to allow anybody infected with this disease to go up. But I wonder how it is possible to restrict people from going up there. It is physically impossible to examine every one who goes to Darjeeling. I have a copy of the letter by Dr. Cousins of Almora sanatorium, who writes that since the establishment of the sanatorium there, every house has been infected with this disease. The sanatorium itself may not be very dangerous but the influx of patients who will go there and reside in the town is the most dangerous thing.

Lastly, Sir, perhaps the members of this House are quite aware that Darjeeling was kept excluded from Bengal on account of its backwardness in every respect. It has been partially included since 1937 under the new constitution. When it was included we were given very high hopes and we thought that something very beneficial to ameliorate the wretched condition of the poor people of Darjeeling would be done, we expected that some climatic college not only for the benefit of hundreds of hill boys who cannot afford to come down for higher studies but also for the benefit of the whole of Bengal would be started, we expected that free compulsory primary education would be introduced to remove the illiteracy of the masses, we expected that some big industrial institute would be started in a place like Kalimpong which is a very big trade centre for wool, oranges, cardamons, etc., to solve the problem of unemployment, we expected that some posts in the provincial and all the Government services would be reserved for us in consideration to our services and loyalty to the Government, but to our utter disappointment we find that the Government proposes to give us the most terrible disease the tuberculosis. Are we to regard this as the first morsel of *dalvat* that the popular Ministry proposes to us? We, hill people, are still very very backward and as such we require special care and protection by the Government. It has been always the policy of the British Government to protect the interest of the backward and minority communities and I hope this policy will be followed. We have been neglected very much. I don't find anywhere in the budget any provision made for the uplift of the backward people of Darjeeling excepting a paltry sum of Rs. 10,000 the capital grant for the Nepali Girl School in Darjeeling. I don't think we hill people specially the Gurkhas who have been loyal to the Government all along are to be ignored in this way. The Gurkha nation is a great asset to the whole of India. Time may come when their services will be needed most. I can hardly believe that any nation without the

force behind it can thrive. I, therefore, earnestly appeal to the Government just to give up the idea of establishing any sanatorium in Darjeeling where the people are very susceptible to this disease on account of their bad mode of living and not to inject this fell disease into us and spoil the only beautiful hill station and the health resort for all people of Bengal and India and which has been described as the "Queen of the Hills" by Sir John Anderson, the ex-Governor of Bengal.

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to lend my support to the criticism which has been expressed about the inadequacy of medical provision for the rural areas in Bengal.

We, Sir, are always fond of talking of the hungry millions, but very often we are content to do little else. This is all the more surprising in view of the fact that in the House the vast majority of members owe their position to the suffrage of these very people and the Government, which is only an Executive Committee of this House, is in the end entirely dependent upon the votes of these hungry, illiterate and poverty-striken masses who drag on a weary existence from day to day.

We find, Sir, that for the whole of Bengal only Rs. 3,33,000 are provided for supplying medicine to the people of the rural areas, as opposed to about Rs. 16 lakhs for the people of one city of Calcutta. And what is worse is that these Rs. 3½ lakhs for the rural areas are spent in a way that gives the least benefit for the greatest proportion of the people concerned.

Speaking from my personal experience as Chairman of the Bogra District Board, I know of unions in the district which cannot boast of a single dispensary of even the most rudimentary type. I would go further and say that even in some thanas the provision of medical relief is of the most teneous kind. In Bogra there are thanas which have only one dispensary for the whole area, and when we remember that the area of the thana is about 400 square miles one can easily understand what one dispensary to an area of 400 square miles means in terms of relief to those who really need it.

I should not be extravagant and do not claim that to-morrow there should be a fully equipped dispensary in every village, though I must say that it should be the ideal towards which we must work. And I must say further that it is the duty of the State to see that every single citizen of the State receives adequate medical help when he or she needs it. But I shall not be extravagant, as I have already said, but would only say that with a little more of planning and carefully organised scheme, we could with these slender resources which we possess to-day give far better service than is at present the case.

There are in Bengal 4,738 Union Boards, and if the Government aim at giving one unit dispensary to each Union Board, and with a doctor for every three such units we would require 4,738 unit dispensaries forming 1,579 or roughly 1,600 circuits with like amount of circuit doctors.

Each unit dispensary (both central and branch) would be attended twice a week by a pair of medical officer and compounder who would have their quarters at the site of the central dispensary. The central dispensary may be equipped with all necessary medicines, sundries and instruments, while the branch dispensaries would be equipped with medicines for the common diseases only.

The cost of maintaining each such circuit would be—

| | Per year. Rs. |
|---|---|
| Doctor—Salary Rs. 30 plus allowance Rs. 10, i.e., Rs. 40 per month ... | 480 |
| Compounder—Salary Rs. 12 plus allowance Rs. 3, i.e., Rs. 15 per mensem ... | 180 |
| Contingency—Rs. 6 per month ... | 72 |
| Allowance for servants for branch dispensaries at Rs. 3 to Rs. 6 per mensem ... | 72 |
| Medicines for central dispensary ... | 350 |
| Medicine for two branch dispensaries ... | 200 |
| Total | 1,354 |

Roughly speaking we would require about Rs. 1,400 for each circuit. Therefore, for 1,600 circuits we would require a sum of Rs. 22,40,000. In other words a sum of Rs. 22½ lakhs could bring medical relief and aid within the reach of every single inhabitant of the province. And what is astounding is that the District Boards spend Rs. 16,35,212 and Union Boards Rs. 1,91,945 for this purpose which together total a sum of about Rs. 18½ lakhs. So what is really wanted is, Sir, that the resources of these various bodies should be pooled together and a comprehensive scheme along the lines suggested, drawn up in collaboration with local bodies so that instead of having isolated dispensaries scattered in haphazard fashion a systematic distribution of dispensaries be made so that it may be possible to have one unit dispensary in each union of the province.

**Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the motion of Dr. S. C. Mukherji. For the year 1938-39, Rs. 20,28,000 more has been estimated for medicine and public health than for the year 1937-38. Of this amount, Rs. 6,36,000 is for medicine and about Rs. 14 lakhs for Public Health. It is a credit to the Hon'ble Minister and his colleagues too.

But, Sir, how much of this amount of Rs. 58,92,000 may be spent for the purpose of common mass living in the mufassil who form about 80 per cent. of the population and how much for the people living in big towns like Calcutta who are generally in much better position than those mentioned above; how much on an average for the Muslim community who form some 56 per cent. of the population, and how much for other communities, are the points that generally strike everybody.

Sir, when we think of all these points in the budget, we become disappointed. My Calcutta friends may accuse me of my unsympathetic talk and topic, but, Sir, it is an unpleasant bitter pill to swallow. May I remind those friends that the overwhelming majority of their representation to this House and Upper from the mufassil is sufficiently solid ground and justification of their rightful claim. We want equity and justice as far as possible and practicable. The mufassil people suffer much for want of the cheaper type of dispensaries. Far to speak of every union, there are a large number of thanas without a single dispensary while for the establishment charges, for the allowances and contingencies and for the injudicious high salaries of the officers unparallelled to any other country beyond our own exhaust the last unit of coin of the resources. Sir, the superfluities here while the inadequate provision for the rural Bengal is the most striking point of contrast to mark and redress.

Sir, the Muslims are the worst sufferers from their legitimate share in that huge amount as they are not properly represented, far to speak of adequately, in the department. In this respect I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the Muslims scarcely get any sympathy and even-handed justice even from some European high officials. I do not find any reason. Sir, I crave your indulgence at this opportunity to remind those English and European high officers of this department and others too if they are so, that they have done inhuman injustice to the Muslim community for over a century and a half by trampling under foot their just, rightful, and equitable claim. Will they still go on without showing any sympathy to them? Are they led by their free conscience or by the whims of their non-Muslim and non-European subordinates? Or are they void of their inherent sympathy for the Muslims? I believe not.

It gives me much pain in saying this. I hope I shall not be misunderstood and misinterpreted.

Sir, the country where the people even nowadays hardly know the importance of vaccination, sanitation, etc., where the people owing to their dire ignorance of preliminary knowledge of first aid to accidents, epidemic, cholera, smallpox, malaria, kala-azar, etc., are devoured by millions per year, and where 98 per cent. of the population are ignorant and illiterate, how will you elevate that country to a proper level? How will you eradicate the very root of fell diseases and epidemic if some all-provincial scheme of adult education which is a subject-matter of education and finance, is not introduced in every district, by side of your heart and soul attempt for combating those diseases.

(The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Dr. COBINDA CHANDRA BHAWMIK:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the cut motion of Dr. Mukherji. The medical administration of Bengal is a heavy one. Out of 58 lakhs that is allotted this year, 17 lakhs will go to the pockets of the officers as pay and 9 lakhs will go to the pockets of 127 officers including I.M.S. officers and other higher officers. Pay of the establishment is nearly 7 lakhs, and contract contingencies under that head 4 lakhs. And really the major portion of the money is spent for the Upper Services. But when the question of rural relief comes, there is no money. There are 47 hospitals in Calcutta and Government spends for these hospitals nearly 18 lakhs and for the rural hospitals nearly one thousand four hundred in number, Government spend only 4 lakhs. That is the proportion of the Medical Administration in Bengal.

Now let us compare the two Colleges the Belgachia Medical College managed by the Bengalis and the Calcutta Medical College managed by the Europeans. Let us see the financial position and the beds and we will realise the position. In the Calcutta Medical College there are nearly 7 hundred beds and there are yearly 18 thousand indoor patients and 170 thousand out-door patients treated. Government contribute 8 lakhs and odd and the expenditure of that institution is nearly 11 lakhs; whereas in the Belgachia Medical College there are 398 beds 7 thousand indoor patients and 70 thousand out-door patients are treated and the cost of administration is Rs. 3,36,900. The most pitiable condition is this. Government contribution in 1935 for that Institution was very meagre, namely, 35 thousand, so that the big college where so many graduates are coming out of the same and who are rendering yeoman service are being neglected by Government and they are treated otherwise, whereas they should have got much help from the medical authority.

Let us come to the picture of the villages. There are 5 thousand unions in Bengal and there 11 hundred dispensaries including those aided by District Boards and Union Boards and the major portion of

the funds is being met by the local bodies as the Government grant is very poor. In some cases the yearly grant is 40 or 50 rupees. Is it not adding injury to the insult? The grant of Rs. 40 to 50 is very poor, consider that there are 6 thousand beds in mufassil whereas in Calcutta we have got 4 thousand beds. The expenditure ratio is this. Government spend 50 per cent. in Calcutta, whereas it is only 10 per cent. in mufassil. So long the hospitals were managed by the local bodies, i.e., by the public. Now those days are gone. It is now the bounden duty of Government to maintain all the institutions as far as possible and Government is the custodian of the life of the people. Let us see what is the health of the people. So many thousands of people are dying because of the lack of proper medical——

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat).

**Mr. W. L. ARMSTRONG:** May I draw the attention of the House to the Grants for Medical purposes enumerated on page 273 of the Civil Budget Estimate.

The figures compel me to ask for a statement of Government's policy about nursing staffs.

I speak from memory of past Budgets, but the figure of Rs. 11,300 as the grant for Government pupil nurses and *dais* seems to me so familiar as to be correct. You will find that the revised budget estimate for 1937-38 was raised to Rs. 15,000 yet the budget estimate for 1938-39 is only Rs. 3,700 under this head.

It is not my intention to harass the Department, nor do I expect wonders to be worked at the end of a year, with the many calls from various directions for financial relief. But it is obvious that there has been some error or omission in arriving at the alarmingly reduced figure of Rs. 3,700 and I trust that the Minister will speedily rectify this.

Turning to the grant to the Calcutta Nursing Institution, I see the Budget estimate to be Rs. 1,17,400. It has been customary I admit to vote Rs. 1 lakh, knowing full well that additional grants would have to be made during the year (for example the grant for 1936 was one lakh, but there had to be made an additional grant of Rs. 50,000). I do not see any purpose in continuing the custom of piecemeal grants. The revised estimate for 1937-38 shows Rs. 1,86,300 and it is obvious that Rs. 1,17,400 will not be adequate for 1938-39.

To meet the situation in 1933, an authoritative and representative committee considered that Rs. 2 lakhs should be granted. If it was so then, it is certainly more than ever needed now. May I ask the Minister to take an early opportunity of inviting this House to vote an additional grant of rupees one lakh. This would enable the Calcutta Nurses Institution to calculate a programme of expenditure for the year, and for the immediate future I advocate that the basis of the

Budget grant be rupees two lakhs, instead of rupees one lakh with consequent additional grants.

The time at my disposal will not allow me to deal with the working hours of the nurses in the Medical College Group of Hospitals, but when I cite the following instances the House will realise the laborious nature of the work.

In one instance, there is night duty extending from 14 to 21 nights, necessitating the nurse to be ready to take over charge of her duties at 7-45 p.m. and being relieved at 6-30 next morning. In actual practice she is not relieved then, for the handing over of a ward requires a further half an hour at least.

In the case of the Maternity Hospital I understand that the nurses in training after night duty are not permitted to retire until 10 a.m. as they are expected to attend the labour room should they be summoned, as in the course of their training they are called upon to witness a minimum of 100 cases. So that a nurse in training in the Eden Hospital having gone on duty at 8 p.m. is not actually free until 10 a.m.—a period of 14 hours.

But her exertion does not end there. She has to be in uniform again at 3-30 p.m. either to answer summons to the Labour Room or attend lectures. It surely then was no overstatement when I declared recently that the requirements of a nurse in training, under present conditions, where the physique of an Amazon, the temperament of an Archangel and the ability of a Graduate—a rare combination and not likely to be attracted to the Medical College training ground.

That is the prospect of a Maternity Nurse in Calcutta, and if you expect her to work for long hours in a overcrowded hospital you are expecting the impossible. I surely did not make any exaggerated statement when I last spoke in this House—

(At this stage the member having reached his time-limit, resumed his seat).

The House was then adjourned for 15 minutes.

(*After adjournment.*)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I shall now call upon the Hon'ble Minister in charge to reply, because we shall have to close the debate shortly.

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** Sir, will you allow me to move my motion?

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Sir, I should like to suggest that Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha should be allowed to move his motion,

and then the Hon'ble Minister may be called upon to reply to the debate.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I do not mind that. I hope, Mr. Mridha, you will be very brief.

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** Yes, Sir, I shall be very brief.

Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 50,92,500 required for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100 (desirability to establish village dispensaries one in each union).

When we read page 20 of the statement of the Hon'ble Finance Minister we find that Rs. 10,000 has been provided for the establishment of village dispensaries.

Sir, wider franchise has brought us in touch with the poorer sections of the people. Election manifestoes of even the most reactionary members contained promises of doing good to the rural masses. In fact only those who could impress the villagers by promises, true or false, have come here to legislate and to discuss the budget of Bengal.

The Government is there; it is felt by the people. But how? They surely feel the presence of the police. The *Hakims* are also there to assert themselves from time to time. But the average villager, who exercises the right of voting, does not feel the existence of the Government in anything else.

The villager knows the Zemindars and the tenure-holders. They tyrannize, and the people feel their presence. The Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Huq and we made promises to relieve their distress in reducing the zemindary *zoolum*, and we have by a majority shelved the problem—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. Mr. Mridha, you should confine your remarks to the motion under discussion.

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** Yes, Sir, I will do so.

Hereafter the Revenue Commission, and not we, shall bother over the lot of the rural people in the matter of tenancy legislation and land revenue system. Our lease of four years—more properly three years—will expire before the mountain after its labour will produce the proverbial mouse.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I am sorry, I have to warn you again to confine yourself strictly to the motion you are moving.

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** Then I may say, Sir, that th poor men of the villages have got to have patience and their need will be provided for—this will probably be the reply from the Treasur Benches: I do not know what will be the reply of our friend supporting the present Government.

I am not a visionary, Sir. I manage my own household. manage some public bodies though they are small ones.

I know how money can be diverted from one head to another Money came in torrents. There was a windfall. Two crores o rupees could have been very easily saved and applied for giving relie to the poor of the villages. The normal business of the country coul go on as merily as ever. Provision for the problems of the village could be made even then. Money is scattered right and left even nov for adding more comforts to the people of the cities and the towns which could be better utilized for giving relief to the dumb millions o the village. For them the problems are not too many. Two of thei problems have already been tackled! No further amendment o tenancy legislation—no Primary Education without taxation—is th verdict already given—no matter they are steeped in ignorance and are unable to feel that they are men—unable to feel that they have a right to live!!!

They are dying in numbers never knowing that malaria, Kala-azar, cholera, and other pestilential diseases are both preventible and curable.

Little water, a little medicine are the outstanding crying needs of the country. If Government had a little imagination they could slove both these problems satisfactorily by this budget. Money for these purposes could easily be found. The question is not one of money but whether you have imagination for the purpose, and whether your talk of village uplift is sincere or not. The hopes held out by the Hon'ble Minister are somewhat reassuring though not fully satisfactory. It is not known, however, when these unsatisfactory assurances will be implemented.

Patching, cobbling, or tinkering in thousand places permeate the budget from page to page. But none of the items go to benefit the rural folk. I shall be glad—I shall be satisfied if the Ministry will show me one single item in their budget which goes directly to benefit the average villager.

With these words, Sir, I am trying my best to impress on the Hon'ble Minister in charge the desirability of establishing village dispensaries one in each Union.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I shall try to be brief, Sir. I will only touch upon the points that have been raised by the

honourable members speaking on this demand and also on the cut motions. The cut motion moved by Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi has raised the point of taking price, if I am correct in using that expression, for medicine dispensed to outdoor patients. I am afraid I have not been quite clear in my mind as to what he meant by saying that charges are made when patients go to outdoor dispensaries for medicines. It may be one of two things, or it may be both. It may be that he was referring to the so-called ticket fees charged by mufassil dispensaries when patients go to the dispensaries for treatment and medical advice. It may also mean that charges are sometimes made for very costly medicines in special treatment of certain diseases. I may say at once that so far as medicines dispensed to outdoor patients in State hospitals are concerned, no charges are generally made. It is only in the case of very costly medicines which are not stocked in the outdoor dispensaries that patients are sometimes advised to purchase these medicines. Of course when these medicines are purchased and brought, free service is rendered. I understand, so far as my information goes, this practice prevails not only over the whole of India but over the whole world. The reason appears to be simply obvious. If in outdoor dispensaries all these costly medicines were to be stored, then it will be simply impossible for any Government or anybody to carry on the medical administration. Secondly, there is this objection that people who can afford to pay will take advantage of it without making any payment. The other thing referred to, namely, that charges are made as ticket fees by dispensary authorities in the mufassil, I am aware that in some dispensaries levies are made which vary from one pice to one anna from patients when they go to dispensaries for treatment; but this is always subject to the rule, I think the statutory rule 38 of the rules, that indigent and poor patients are always to be exempted from this fee. It may be stated that the poor generally do not get exemption, whereas the rich do get exemption. This is a matter which relates to malpractices and in spite of efforts on the part of us all I think you cannot eradicate it until and unless public opinion has grown on this point very strong. Now, it is entirely in the discretion of the local bodies, and I am afraid Government cannot do more than what they have already done. In this matter if it be desired that it should be prohibited by legislation or by statutory rules, I am afraid the first objection will come from the local bodies themselves, because it may have the effect of closing down many of the dispensaries. So that is my submission with regard to the cut motion moved by Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi.

He has made one suggestion, namely, to put a cut to the pay of the medical officers who get pay and are also allowed private practice by which, he says they earn a good deal of money. It is not my

duty here either to defend or to say whether the pay that the medical officers get is exorbitant or not, but all that I should like to point out is that because they are allowed private practice they are given much less pay than men of other services. Therefore, I think that the proposal made in the cut motion is not a feasible one and is not in the best interests of the country at large, though I fully sympathise with the Maulana Saheb in his desire to do good to the poor and in his earnest desire to see that the poor people get medical relief free.

Coming now to the speech of Dr. S. C. Mukherji, I do not for a moment dispute the picture that he has drawn of the suffering of the poor people in the mufassil. The picture in my opinion has not in the least been overdrawn—rather it errs on the other side. But the point is not that: the point is as to how to solve the problem and I can only say that since I came in office, I have been trying my best to find out myself how to solve this problem of medical relief of the masses of Bengal, and in my humble way I have arrived at certain conclusions which have already been embodied in the shape of a scheme and that is being further examined in detail. I welcome any suggestion from any honourable member of this House including Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali to supply me with a definite scheme which I assure the members of the House will be duly considered at the time of framing any comprehensive scheme for the medical relief of the masses of Bengal.

Dr. Mukherji has dealt with various problems,—of the provision of X-ray in Sadar hospitals, of provision for tuberculosis patients, segregation, if possible, of tubercular patients, of leprosy and so on and so forth. I may say at once that all these matters have engaged my attention and in fact on all these points some decision had already been arrived at. So far as Sadar hospitals are concerned, I think X-ray plant has already been installed in 13 out of 26 district hospitals and the rest I hope will have X-ray plant in the course of a short time. As regards tuberculosis, I have already made my statement, but the problem of segregation of tubercular patients does not seem to be a practical proposition for the time being. However that will be looked into very carefully.

So far as Leprosy is concerned, we have got a scheme for it and there is a provision in the budget to the extent of Rs. 50,000 for this purpose.

Coming to the speech of Mr. Damber Singh Gurung about the location of the climatic sanitarium, he has pleaded that it should not be established in Darjeeling, because it may adversely affect the Darjeeling people and that it may suitably be established somewhere near Calcutta and he has also made a suggestion that the whole money may be given to the Jadabpur Hospital. In the first place I may assure him at

once that the condition of this donation is that the tuberculosis sanitarium should be established in Bengal at the best site available and Government have been on the look out for a pretty long time to find out the most suitable site in Bengal. This is a matter on which I doubt whether my opinion should prevail or the opinion of Mr. Gurung —the opinion of the experts, in my humble opinion, should prevail. I may assure the Hon'ble member that if it is decided to establish a climatic sanitarium in Darjeeling due precaution will be taken that the health of Darjeeling people does not suffer on account of the establishment of the sanitarium. On the other hand, our experts have advised and I agree with them that the establishment of a climatic sanitarium in Darjeeling where the incidence of tubercular infection is of a high degree at present, will be a definite blessing to Darjeeling, provided of course suitable clinics be established there and Government have decided that wherever this sanitarium may be established, there will be a clinic attached to it for the treatment of the local people. If it be established in the Hills, due care will be taken for the treatment of the hill people. I may also state that effective steps will be taken to see that infection does not spread in the locality where this sanitarium may be established. I think I have already spoken about Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali's suggestion.

Coming now to Mirza Hafiz Sahib I regret to say that I have not been able to hear him, and consequently I cannot reply to him.

So far as Dr. Gobind Chandra Bhowmick is concerned he has made a comparison between the medical relief in Calcutta and the medical relief in the mufassil. He has also spoken something about the contrast between the cost of Medical College and the Carmichael College complaining at the same time that suitable grant has not been made to the Carmichael College. I think I have made a statement with regard to the expenditure in Calcutta and outside Calcutta and in fact it is not quite correct to say that the Calcutta hospitals are meant only for Calcutta people. They are provincial hospitals and the people of the whole province are treated there. As a matter of fact they are provincial concerns.

As for the Carmichael College, I am informed that there is a recurring grant of Rs. 52,000 per year and we have given a grant of Rs. 1,50,000 for the establishment of a Maternity Ward, to save the institution from disaffiliation, half of which was provided for last year and the other half has been provided in this year's budget.

Coming to the arguments of Mr. Armstrong——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You have already taken 16 minutes. I hope you will be very short.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Four points have been raised. First, he has said that the provision for pupil nurses has been reduced. This is not the fact. A difference in the system of accounting has placed the sum from one place to another. There has been no reduction whatsoever under this head.

As regards the question of the provision for the Calcutta Hospital Nurses' Institute, I can say that there has been a serious omission in the budget. But Government will find another Rs. 58,000 for this institute, provided of course the Calcutta Corporation give Rs. 12,000 and I hope the Calcutta Corporation will give that amount.

As regards the request for a further grant, namely, that there should be an increased grant of Rs. 2 lakhs, I am afraid in this matter I cannot concede in view of the decision which had been arrived at last year, just before the present Government came into power, by Sir John Woodhead who took into consideration every one of the facts and then came to the definite conclusion that this institution should get Rs. 1,70,000 including the Rs. 12,000 to be paid by the Calcutta Corporation and that this arrangement should continue for five years and no deviation should be made in this arrangement during that period.

As regards the working hours, I will look into this matter.

As regards the pupil nurses, I am told the figures given by Mr. Armstrong are not correct. It is not Rs. 3 that they get, but the pay varies from Rs. 15 to something which I do not remember now. I hope, however, I will look into the matter very carefully, and will have a talk with Mr. Amstrong in this matter.

Coming to the question raised by Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha, I have already made a statement to the effect that Government have decided to see that medical relief is available to the remotest part of the country and the only thing that I would like to tell him is that so long as that scheme cannot be put into operation and so long as the present system of grant to village dispensaries continues, Government will see that not a single deserving institution is deprived of this grant.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Who will decide if they are deserving?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The local officers and District Boards. These institutions have got to be established under the present system by the local bodies or private individuals. I have already said that so long as the present system continues, we have got to be guided by the conditions of the system. A local body or a generous person starts a dispensary and then it is reported on as being efficiently run, by the Civil Surgeon, which report is sent up by the District Magistrate through the Commissioner with a request for a

grant and Government give a grant. I can say, perhaps, that so far as the current year is concerned, we have given grants on all the applications that we received with the recommendation of the local officers and the District Boards, and I hope we will be able to provide for every one of the institutions which will be so recommended by the local officials for the next year. I think I cannot go further than that so long as the present system continues.

I think I have finished and I commend my motion for the demand to the acceptance of this House.

The motion of Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi that the demand under the head "32—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Sharat Chandra Mukherji that the demand under the head "32—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha that the demand under the head "32—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and a division called.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Mr. Speaker, may I draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Jogesh Chandra Gupta has gone over to that side and is talking with the members and canvassing their support?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If Mr. Jogesh Chandra Gupta has done that, there is Mr. Shahabuddin of the Coalition Party who is engaged in doing the same! (Laughter.)

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Sir Bijoy Prosad Singh Roy is also similarly engaged over there, Sir.

The division was taken with the following result:

**AYES.**

Abdul Hafeez, Khan Bahadur Syed.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi.
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Acharyya Choudhury, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktacha, Mymensingh.
Aftab Ali, Mr.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Banerjee, Dr. Suresh Chandra.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerjee, Mr. Sibnath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Banerji, Mr. Satya Priya.
Bannerjee, Mr. Manoranjan.
Barma, Babu Premhari.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhaumik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Bose, Mr. Sarat Chandra.
Chakraborty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chakraborty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Mahim Chandra.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Babu Khagendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Bhirendra Nath.
Dutel, Mr. Narendra.

Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Dutta Mazumder, Mr. Nibaroodu.
Emdadul Haque, Kazi.
Fazlur Rahman (Muktear), Mr.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Giasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Golam Sarwar Hossini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hasan Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Syed.
Himatsingka, Mr. Prabhudayal.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kasem Ali Mirza, Sajibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr.
Maiti, Mr. Nikunja Behari.
Maitra, Mr. Surendra Mohan.
Maji, Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mazumdar, Mr. Birendra Nath.
Mal, Mr. Iswar Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Manirazzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hossain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Mr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. S.
Mukherji, Dr. H. C.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Naskar, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Pain, Mr. Baroda Prasanna.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Babu Patiram.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Kishori Pati.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Rai Bahadur Kshirod Chandra.
Sanaullah, Al-Haj Maulana Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Babu Nagendra Nath.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr. M.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi.
Yousuf Mirza.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

## NOES.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Bari, Maulvi.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hafiz Mia, Mr.
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Jabbar Palwan, Mr. Md.
Abdul Kader, Mr.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Sahib Maulvi S.
Abdur Rauf, Mr. Shah.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abidur Reza Chowdhury, Khan Bahadur.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hossain, Mr. Ahmed.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Aftab Hossain Joardar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali, Khan Sahib Maulana Enayetpuri.
Ahmed Hossain, Mr.
Alimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Aminullah, Maulvi.
Amir Ali, Md. Mia.
Anderson, Mr. J. P.
Armstrong, Mr. W. L.
Ashrafali, Mr. M.
Asiad Hossain Khan, Maulvi.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Crossfield, Mr. L. M.
Das, Mr. Anukul Chandra.
Das, Mr. Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Faziul Huq, the Hon'ble Mr. A. K.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Habibullah, the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hafizuddin Chowdhury, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H
Jalaluddin Ahmad Khan Bahadur, Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Sahib.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Mafizuddin Choudhury, Maulvi.
Maguire, Mr. L. T.
Mahtab, Maharajkumar Uday Chand.
Mahtabuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.

Munirruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Miller, Mr. G.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mir. Md.
Momin Ali Mollah, Maulvi.
Mozammel Haq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Sahib Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Dr. Syed.
Muhammad Soleiman, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustaqawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nandy, the Hon'ble Maharaja Srischandra, of Kasimbazar.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nausher Ali, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Patton, Mr. W. G.
Paul, Sir Hari Sankar.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur, A. M. L.
Raikut, the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddi Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Ray Chaudhury, Mr. Birendra Kishore.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khandkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahiur Rahman, Maulvi.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.

Ayes being 96 and Noes 112, the motion was lost.

The original motion that a sum of Rs. 50,92,500 be granted for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" was then put and agreed to.

## 39—Public Health.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 45,47,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health."

Sir, the total provision in the budget is Rs. 46,71,000, of which Rs. 1,24,000 is charged and the balance, viz., Rs. 45,47,000 is voted. The actual expenditure in the year 1934-35 was Rs. 36,01,000, in the year 1935-36, Rs. 35,99,000, in the year 1936-37, Rs. 34,28,000, and the revised estimate for the year 1937-38 is Rs. 32,79,000. The budget provision is, as already stated. The increase over the revised budget is Rs. 13,92,000 which has been accounted for at pages 101 and 102 of the Red Book. All the items of new expenditure are to be found there, and I do not think I should dilate on details.

I think, I need hardly repeat that my statement here again would be just supplementary to the statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. I would like, however, to add a few words by way of amplification of the statement made by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. While talking of the demands on public health one cannot but feel that the first thing that should be talked about is the health organisation now existing in the country. The health organisation in the country

consists of the Director of Public Health with a few Assistant Directors and the Engineering staff known as the Public Health Engineering staff. Then comes the rural health organisation with the District Health Officer at the head and one health unit at each thana headquarters. The total cost of this health organisation, apart from the Health Officer, is borne at present by the Local Government, and it comes up to nearly Rs. 12 lakhs annually. So far as the pay of the Health Officer is concerned, one-half of it is paid by the Government and the other half by the District Board. Now, Sir, this health organisation has come in for a good deal of criticism. Apart from the inherent defect of an infant organisation, it has been stated that the staff is both qualitatively and quantitatively inadequate. There is a good deal of force in this criticism, and Government have considered this aspect very carefully and have come to the conclusion that the health staff should be reorganised and that the qualification of the staff should be much better, so that they may be able to deal with the health problems of the province. It has also been decided that it should be numerically strengthened and, in fact, a reorganisation scheme has been drawn up which provides for combined medical relief and health organisation. This scheme will involve, as I have already stated, while speaking on the demand for medical relief, several lakhs of rupees, and the details are under examination. Coming now to the specific problem of public health in the province the first problem that strikes one is malaria. In my opinion, Sir, the problem of malaria is not only the first and foremost health problem, but I think it is the first problem of all problems in Bengal. Malaria not only takes a heavy toll of human life in Bengal but devitalises and emasculates the population, makes them an easy prey to other fell diseases, and, in fact, its effect on the economic condition of the country is very great.

Therefore, the first problem in my opinion that should be tackled is the malaria problem. We are all conversant with the ravages of malaria in the mufassal and Government are fully alive to the necessity of controlling malaria. They have decided to take all possible steps in their power to tackle this problem, and it is expected that a comprehensive programme will be drawn up as soon as the survey undertaken is completed. For the present, Sir, Government have decided to have an intensive malaria work in some locality with a grant of one lakh which the Government of India have sanctioned after the presentation of this budget, and the Provincial Government have agreed to find another lakh out of the provincial revenues. Furthermore, the provision for quinine has gone up to Rs. 4 lakhs which, according to expert opinion, will be sufficient not only for the number of patients that attend dispensaries, but will also be available for giving relief to a fraction of patients who cannot attend the dispensaries. There is also an increased provision for anti-malarial work to the extent of 3 lakhs of rupees, and localized anti-malarial work will be taken up. In fact,

Government have decided to tackle this problem on a comprehensive basis, and they have decided that there ought to be a continuity of policy and continuity of resources and steps will be taken towards that direction. In my humble opinion, Sir, the people of Bengal have got only to choose between two alternatives. They should either drive out malaria from Bengal, or they must agree to be driven to the other world by malaria. These are the two alternatives, and it lies with the people of Bengal to co-operate with Government in their efforts to control this terrible scourge of malaria so that Bengal may live happily and in a prosperous way.

Now, Sir, the next problem that presents itself is the problem of tuberculosis, and Government here also have made up their mind to do all in their power to combat the disease.

**Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister shorten his speech in prefaces and conclusions so that others may have an opportunity to speak? On the previous grant he took more than 45 minutes, and if he absorbs the major portion of the time, we would have no time to discuss.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I don't like to tax the patience of the hon'ble members who do not want to hear me. I simply say, I will try my best to have programmes and policies for combating tuberculosis and also for combating leprosy. So far as tuberculosis is concerned, in my opinion some of the main causes are bad housing, malnutrition, prolonged sickness from malaria and other diseases and disregard of rules of personal hygiene. The first thing to my mind to be tackled is bad housing, and in this connection my attention was drawn to a distressing fact only the other day when I had to go out on inspection in the town of Calcutta to some of the improvement works undertaken by the Improvement Trust. It appeared to me that these improvement works have been undertaken without any regard for the housing arrangements of the poor people who are going to be driven out of the town. This is a very serious problem, and this came to me like a shock when I compared that with what I found in other parts of India, namely, even in a Native State like Mysore. There I found pretty dwelling houses constructed for the poorer people and the labouring classes.

Now, so far as the nutrition is concerned, the effect thereof is well known, and I do not want to dilate upon that. Then comes the problem of kala-azar also. Here I can tell the House at once that Government have decided not only to spend Rs. 80,000 that is there in the budget, but they are prepared to spend as much as may be necessary for controlling this disease even in the current year.

Now, as regards leprosy, a scheme has been prepared for it, and at the beginning Rs. 50,000 has been provided in the budget in this connection.

Last but not the least comes the question of water-supply, and we have already started a survey of rural water-supply throughout the whole province, and we have provided for Rs. 7,50,000 for this purpose.

I think I should rather resume my seat without further taxing the patience of the House.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 45,47,000 under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100 on the ground of failure to lay down a comprehensive scheme for improving the public health of the province and to implement the same.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have had enough of eloquence, and to tell you frankly the speech of the Hon'ble Minister has not left any impression on us, whatsoever may be the assurances and reassurances of his activities regarding malaria. It is very easy to give assurances, but it is very difficult to execute them. If I forget not, in the previous budget session, the same Hon'ble Minister gave us assurances that he would do his level best to eradicate malaria from Bengal, but how far has he been able to execute the matter is the question before the House. Eloquence we have had enough, and we are accustomed to hear it from different platforms and from different gentlemen, and I think the Hon'ble Mr. Nausher Ali has excelled even the Chief Minister to-day. But I do not think that he has created any impression whatsoever on the House. During the budget speech last year both the Finance Minister and the Minister in charge of Public Health gave us to understand that they were not wholly responsible for the budget scheme. But this year, they have got no justification whatsoever to shirk the responsibility at the door of other people. The stereotyped process of submitting the budget is going on. There is no imagination, no life, no outlook whatsoever. The present heterogenous Cabinet with its halting policy can give assurance to each and every section, but to our misfortune we must say that nothing has been executed up till now. The Cabinet themselves do not know where they are being drifted to. They are like dry leaves being carried away here and there by each and every passing wind, and they do not know where to stop and how to begin, and how to execute their assurances. The Chief Minister wants to satisfy the Jute Mill Owners' and at the same time the jute-growers, the mill-owners and the mill hands, the landlords and at the same time the tenants. This is so very peculiar! We are all being given assurances no doubt. This halting policy of the Government to satisfy each and everyone has, I think, if I mistake not, incurred greater displeasure and has brought them to greater exposure. The Hon'ble Mr. Nausher Ali last year gave us an assurance like this. I would like to quote his own words. He said, "I attach the greatest importance to public health work specially on two matters, namely, malaria and water-supply."

The very same thing he has quoted this time also in another form and in another language. But may I ask the Hon'ble Minister how far he has been able to execute during this period of time? With regard to the administration of Jails and Police, there may be difference of opinion, there may be different schools of thought, there may be different ideologies and different outlook, but so far as the "Public Health" is concerned, I will not be mistaken if I say that almost all sections of the people have got, more or less, common understanding, and common factors and the difference of opinion is very very little. But in spite of this co-operation, in spite of the attitude of the public mind, how much has he been able to achieve in this direction during this one year's time? He very cleverly said last time and he very cleverly put it, "I confess I am a slow man, I have no pretension to any claim for experience and knowledge, and I frankly confess that I am very poor in ideas". These are the wordings of the Hon'ble Minister in his previous speech. This modesty on his part on the previous occasion received acclamation and eulogies from our side, but if he continues to be a slow man, if he is still poor in his ideas, does he think, does he expect that we will go on eulogising his modesty for ever, without any execution whatsoever from his side? Then I would like to say that this slow man and this man with poor ideas ought to be.....—I should like to have a reply from the Hon'ble Minister himself. He says that he is a slow man, but, Sir, it will not be an exaggeration to say that he, as Chairman of a District Board, had the privilege of acquiring the best possible experience, the best possible knowledge that one could command, and under the circumstances, even this year he says that "I am a slow man and I am a man of poor ideas". Has he got any justification whatsoever? Let him give a reply to this query of mine. He was Chairman of the Jessore District Board and he might be elated with joy for the petty influence which he commanded, but what was his contribution in his District Board administration? Jessore looms large if for anything it is for malaria. Jessore stands second to none in malaria, even according to the statistics of Government, and whose contribution was this? And I would like to ask, is it the contribution of the Chairman, Maulvi Nausher Ali? If that reflects any pride I won't grudge it; let him enjoy that pride, and let it be noted in his historical career. I have nothing to say. So far as we are concerned, we do not mind who that gentleman was, what were his qualifications as a Chairman, but we want to know how far the people have been benefited during that administration and this is a straight question and that is the only criterion by which we will judge either a Chairman or a Minister or whoever that gentleman may be. (Hear, hear from the Coalition Benches.) Government in Italy and Government in Turkey have stamped out malaria. Even the Panama Canal which was notoriously famous for malarial ravages, we understand that malaria has been radicated, but it is only in Bengal that from year to year we are

hearing of only proposals to stamp out malaria, but no proof whatsoever is evident in this province. Sir, so far I am concerned, personally speaking, I have had no experience, I have had no time to look into these—these artificial ways of demonstration. You will kindly excuse me, Sir, if I would like to say, it is after entering this artificial hall which has an artificial cooling system that I see so many artificial ways of doing things, and demonstrating things. And it will be no exaggeration, Sir, if I say that my Jessore friend, Maulvi Nausher Ali, excels all the Ministers here in giving his artificial expression and in trying to carry the whole House along with him. But this can be done tor the first time, at the most a second time, but in the third time he will not be able to carry us with him. We want something concrete, we want something in the shape and form, and I want something, as a student of economics, in the form of statistics and not in the form of eloquence and thereby try to take us with him by making some phraseologies only. He has mentioned his idea that he has sanctioned 4 lakhs of rupees for quinine and the Hon'ble Minister thinks that this quantity is sufficient. He has quoted some competent opinion that this would meet the needs of the number of persons who appear for treatment.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I have never said so. You have misunderstood me.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Sir, I would like to draw your attention to one fact. Please remember how many deaths are occurring every year due to malaria. According to our report it is 6 lakhs, even according to your Government report and statistics, it is more or less 4 lakhs. You say that you have sanctioned 4 lakhs for quinine and what is that amount? For 4 lakhs of deaths by malaria, one rupee is given per head of dead body by malaria. Will the Hon'ble Minister give us an idea of the burning or burial cost per dead body? Even the burial and burning ceremonies cannot be done at the cost of rupee one. Has this Government got any sense of responsibility? Even the burning ghatwalla won't accept Re. 1 for a dead body. But in the opinion of the Hon'ble Minister this amount which is equal to the number of deaths is considered sufficient for Bengal.

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** What can they do, they spend so much for the administration.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Maulvi Nausher Ali says "I am a poor man in ideas". Yes, Sir, he is really poor in ideas when he says that one rupee quinine for every dead body is sufficient and even he says that in the opinion of competent persons, the amount is considered sufficient. I do not know what sort of persons they are.

The Government may raise a cry that there is insufficiency of funds. We have heard so many times the same story. Sir Bijoy in his previous speech as Minister of the Public Health Department gave a plea that the Government of Bengal were carrying on the administration on overdrafts and it was very difficult for them to approach the Government of India for further financial help or to raise a loan, but after the inauguration of provincial autonomy, can that plea hold good? The Government is now in a position to raise loans—and without taking a loan there is no Minister here—and there is no man here who can cope with the present situation, and can eradicate malaria or can make suitable arrangements for waterworks. It is for that reason I would strongly urge the Government to raise a loan and take up a complete and comprehensive scheme of improving the sanitary conditions of the people of Bengal. Without that scheme it is simply impossible to do anything substantial. Whatever eloquent speech the Minister may deliver, I would like to refer to the speech of the late Mr. C. R. Das, which he delivered in the Council on the 29th February, 1924. The scheme of Mr. Das has not been achieved even to-day. If that scheme is taken up in right earnest, much can be done. It is by the execution of that scheme and not by simply pouring a few eloquent words that we can render real service to our country. I have got no time and so I am hurrying up.

(The member here having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** I welcome with satisfaction and gratefulness the grant of Rs. 10,000 budgeted for the Indian Institute for Medical Research. It is the first institute of its kind in India, started by a few eminent scientists through public subscription. I am further glad to note that the grant has been described as one for the "encouragement of research". This is as it should be, for medical research is the very foundation of all improvements in Public Health. Without it the technique, man has acquired to overcome the tiniest but the most virulent and powerful of his enemies, could never have been devised. The relatively preponderating importance of medical research, in any scheme of Public Health improvement, seems to be insufficiently realised in our country. A large grant has been rightly provided for a Tuberculosis Sanatorium but where is the commensurate grant for Tuberculosis research?

During the last few years of its existence the Indian Institute has accomplished a large amount of valuable original work on Public Health and on Nutritional problems, which has earned recognition both at home and abroad. In Bengal, the Indian Institute was the pioneer in nutritional research, having started a systematic survey of Indian foodstuffs and dietaries, considerably before His Excellency Lord Linlithgow, came out to India and gave a fillip to nutritional work. The activities of the Institute show what a variety of subjects has been

tackled and what an amazing amount of work may be accomplished with modest means and resources when really capable and devoted men with idealism are in charge. Vast buildings do not make research. Men do: able and talented men who are willing to serve so that their country might advance and become great.

The researches, carried out at the Institute, have revealed various deficiencies in urban middle-class diets and indicated methods by which such diets may be corrected. Correct nutrition is the bedrock of health and as recent investigations throughout the world have shewn, emperical choice of food under modern conditions does not lead to what is technically known as optimum nutrition. Dietetics, like other things, have to be investigated and planned with reference to a people's habits, availability of foodstuffs and climatic and other conditions. The Health Section of the League of Nations has done some co-ordinating work in this line on an international scale but in India, nutritional research is still not sufficiently advanced, even for such co-ordination. Some work has been done at Coonoor, Calcutta, Dacca and other centres but nothing in comparison to our needs. Great Britain, Japan, Denmark and Soviet Russia are already applying the newer knowledge of nutrition to the dietetics of their populations. A film has been prepared, in England, under the direction of Professor Julien Huxley, for nutritional propaganda. It is time that we in Bengal took up nutritional work seriously and with determination.

I would like to refer to another problem of an equally vital character and of the utmost importance to the people of Bengal, on which work of the highest value is proceeding at the Institute: I mean Malaria. Malaria, as we all know, takes the largest toll of human life in Bengal, and for the matter of that in India, and what, I think, is worse, leaves behind human wrecks, devitalised, inefficient and prone to infections of all kinds. With weak mothers and fathers, the incidence of infant mortality is bound to be large. Our students are pale and emaciated-looking and the peasants and workers without stamina. The economic loss caused by malaria runs into crores of rupees, and it is idle to prevent this loss without substantial investment in research, reclamation and propaganda. I DO NOT THINK IT IS POSSIBLE TO ERADICATE MALARIA BY KEROSENE TACTICS ALONE. Quinine and a few other anti-malarial synthetic drugs have their place in the cure of Malaria, but they have a very restricted use so far as prevention is concerned. Work at the Institute has already shown that it is possible to produce immunity in monkeys against monkey malaria by the injection of the vaccine prepared at the Institute from monkey malaria parasites. Monkeys, injected with these parasites, would die in ten or twelve days, but the vaccine has conferred complete protection on the experimental monkeys. These researches are of the highest importance and establish the fact that investigation is proceeding on the right line. They need to be extended immediately to human malaria. The Government, if

they like, can get fuller information on the subject from the Institute. Important work on the production of anti-cholera and anti-typhoid sera has also been carried out at the Institute. These researches have got far-reaching implications for the public health of this country.

Malnutrition and loss of resistance against malaria hang together. It is of paramount importance that this House should appreciate fully the implications of nutritional and anti-malarial research. You cannot build an AI nation without improving nutrition and wiping out malaria. I would suggest that a consolidated sum of at least Rs. 50,000 be set apart as a supplement, so that the great work proceeding at the Institute may continue unhampered and may be broadened in scope. The application of the results obtained to the Public Health and Nutritional problems of Bengal will help, in a striking measure, to ameliorate the condition of the people.

The Institute has also found vaccines against what is technically called Leishmania Tropica, commonly known as Dehli Sore or Cambay Boil, in India. I may inform the House, Sir, that I had to act as the rabbit in the School of Tropical Medicine, for months as the investigator could not find fresh germs except from me, in far off London. This is the first protozoal vaccine successfully used in therapy and constitutes a landmark in medical science, the credit for which goes to a son of India.

I would consider it a disaster of the first order to humanity if these efforts are allowed to wither away for want of financial nourishment. Let Bengal be the benefactor of humanity at large through these lines of research, for, by spending the meagre amount I have mentioned, we serve God as well as man. Let us do it.

A sum of Rs. 50,000 has been provided to fight leprosy, but I see no provision made to segregate the carriers of this disease and many other foul diseases; I mean the crowds of mendicants wandering about the best thoroughfares of Calcutta and polluting its air. The problem of mendicancy, not so much as a social sore in our midst but as a positive danger to the health of the city, must be taken in hand at once and a comprehensive scheme of segregation and work-houses prepared without delay. I feel certain that the public will welcome action in this direction and extend what assistance it can to any measures Government might propose to take.

Before I sit down, Sir, may I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the systems of medicine known as Ayurvedic and Unani? These are national and indigenous and, therefore, deserve encouragement. (Hear, hear.) They are suitable to the temperament of our people and, above all, cheaper. Other provinces have taken active steps to acknowledge and encourage them. The cultivation of medicinal herbs is a necessary adjunct. This is not the time to go into details, but the Government will be well advised to study this aspect—if for no

other reason—then to find a suitable alternative money crop in their policy of the restriction of jute cultivation.

**Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I accept the suggestion of the Hon'ble Minister that we should co-operate with Government in solving the problems of Public Health, and in that view I beg to invite the attention of the House to the method of combating malaria which has been adopted with success in Murshidabad and the neighbouring districts. Sir, you are probably aware that about 10 years ago the District Board of Murshidabad found out, as the result of scientific research, that malaria flourishes with, and thrives upon, an aquatic plant which is known as '*pistia*' or *topa pana*, with which the members of this House are so familiar. Now, Sir, it has been found on experiment that wherever there is *topa pana*, malaria rages very fiercely, and as soon as that aquatic plant is weeded out malaria declines. Sir, the work of combating malaria was undertaken on a scientific and extensive scale in the year 1930, and it was proved by demonstration that not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas there is some connection between malaria and *topa pana*. Where there is *topa pana* malaria exists in a virulent form, and where *topa pana* is weeded out malaria disappears, for the time being at least.

Now, Sir, in this connection I would refer to the observations made on the 3rd of September, 1937, by the Hon'ble Minister in charge in reply to a question. These observations will be found at page 944 of the Assembly Proceedings for the Second Session, 1937. The Hon'ble Minister stated "The Bengal Public Health Department has kept a watch on the results of the experiments undertaken by the District Board in Murshidabad and since the year 1933, has been carrying out a survey twice a year in two villages, namely, Gokarna and Munigram, which were selected by the Murshidabad District Board for this experiment. As a result of survey, it has been found that the spleen index of the village Munigram which was 87·5 in July, 1933, before the removal of "pistia", has, after its removal, come down to 11·7 in June, 1937. Similarly, the parasite index, that is, the percentage of children showing malarial parasites in their blood in the same experimental village, Munigram, came down from 96 in July, 1933, to ·095 in June, 1937." Then, Sir, further down, it is stated "In Murshidabad, the cost per head is reported to have been 2½ annas in the experimental areas, and 1 pie in other places. In the town of Murshidabad, the cost is reported to have been a little over 1 pie per head". "The cost of treatment by quinine and plasmochin in the Memari thana of the Burdwan district has been three annas *per capita* of population for drugs and 6 annas 6 pies for the staff employed for treatment".

It appears that there has been some success in this experiment not only in the Murshidabad district, but my friends, Mr. Manindra Bhusan Sinha and Mr. Atul Chandra Kumar, the former a Chairman of District

Board of Bankura and the latter a member from Malda as well as my friends from Nadia and Birbhum will testify that this experiment can be carried on scientifically not only in theory but by practical demonstration and that it has succeeded in so many areas. So, Sir, I would invite the Hon'ble Minister to take up the scheme and give it all the facilities it deserves so that the method can have a fair trial this way or that. I do not of course claim that this is infallible: it may be that the cause and effect are not causally connected, and there may be some invisible factor, but even, the experiment is worth trying, because it is admitted in the Government report and also in the publications by the local self-governing bodies that wherever this method has been tried, the incidence of malaria comes down. There must be something behind it and it cannot be found out unless this experiment is given a fair trial. The theory is that anopheles mosquitoes live and flourish upon a particular larvæ which is prominently and abundantly present in this aquatic weed, *topa pana*, but is not available in other weeds. The Hon'ble Minister will probably say that the removal of weeds and clearing of jungles will reduce malaria. But I can say from my personal experience and upon the authority of no less a person than the Hon'ble Maharaja Srischandra Nandy that in controlled areas where these aquatic weeds remained but other weeds were removed, the incidence of malaria remained as before, but in the experimental areas where only these aquatic weeds were removed, the incidence of malaria came down. In October last year, the Hon'ble Maharaja Srischandra Nandy had an experience of a virulent type of malaria in his own palace at Kasimbazar and he had to take recourse to the Health Department of Murshidabad. It has been demonstrated there by the application of this method—and I can hand over the statistics, of which I have got an extract here, to the Hon'ble Minister—that in Kasimbazar where 90 per cent. of the population were laid up with malaria, as a result of the experiment of this method of removal of these *topa pana* weeds, in 3 weeks' time, malaria came down to 20 per cent. and the parasite came down to 18 per cent. But in the neighbouring places, separated only by the railway line, where this method was not followed, 90 per cent. of the population were suffering from malaria as before.

I would also refer to the result of the experiment in this method only recently carried out at Khosbaspur where the anti-pistia method has been responsible for decreasing the incidence of malaria to a great extent. In the neighbouring village at Gokarna also these weeds were removed and the result was the rapid fall in malaria. This experiment was carried on for about 8 or 9 years. In 1935, the Health Officer of Murshidabad gave an ultimatum on the 24th July that this experiment of the removal of *topa pana* would be discontinued and warned the municipalities and the District Board that malaria would come back very soon on account of the stoppage of the removal of these weeds. Now, Sir, he gave this warning on the 24th July, 1935, and in the middle of 1937, malaria came back with added virulence.

I appeal to the Hon'ble Minister to rise to the occasion and shake off the lethargy and not stand on prestige and prestige alone of the old Government and give a trial to the experiment in a more reasonable and decisive way.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I shall be very brief in my reply. I shall only say in reply to Mr. Atul Krishna Ghose that I never knew before he spoke in this Assembly that I have ever been eloquent. He spoke about my intelligence and shrewdness by which I could deceive the Congress benches on the last occasion. I can assure the Congress benches and I can assure the whole House that I have never in my life cared for praise or blame. I have never said or done anything which I have not felt and believed to be true and right.

Now I find that my administration of the District Board of Jessore has not been spared criticism. I do not know how it is at all relevant in this connection; but I can say at once——

**Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** Is it not a reflection upon the Chair?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I must say I was a bit inattentive at the time. The question of the Hon'ble Minister's administration of the District Board was totally irrelevant to the subject-matter of the debate.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** May I explain how it was relevant. The Hon'ble Minister said in his speech that he had no experience in this line and so I pointed out that he was in charge of the administration of the District Board of Jessore——

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I would throw out a challenge to the honourable member to seek election through joint electorate to-day and I would contest with him in election and I am sure he will be defeated.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** You have enough resources to do so——

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I shall never spend a single farthing for my election. However, these are matters which are not strictly relevant to the point at issue.

I am prepared to make room for Mr. Atul Krishna Ghose if he can prepare a scheme for the improvement of the health of Bengal and implement the same or take steps for the control of Malaria in the course of one year. If he can do this, I am prepared to vacate my

seat at once. I shall vacate this seat to-day and ask Mr. Ghose to do it himself.

I can only tell the House, Sir, that since I assumed office as a Minister I have never taken a single holiday. I have not passed a moment when I have not devoted myself wholeheartedly in the discharge of my duties and the question of malaria and the health of the province has always been uppermost in my mind.

**Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** You are paid for it.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Now, Sir, so far as Mr. Siddiqi is concerned I think I need not give any reply.

With regard to Mr. Sanyal, I may say that I answered this question in course of a reply to a supplementary question the other day and I still stick to that idea, namely, that pistia may have some connection with malaria but it cannot be the cause of malaria. There are places where there is not a single *topapana* but the locality is very greatly affected with malaria.

**Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** Can the Hon'ble Minister cite a single instance in which a particular area is suffering from malaria and there is not a single *topapana* to be found there?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I can give you instances at least from one place: in my own district of Jessore there are places where there is not a single *topapana*, still the places are infected with malaria. That is the reason why I have no faith in this theory. This idea of experimentation of pistia has been in the brain of some gentlemen and the experiment has actually been carried out and I think the result has not been very satisfactory.

Sir, the time being short I do not think I should take the time of the House any more. With these remarks I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** The Hon'ble Minister has thrown out a challenge and may I——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You give your reply to the challenge later on.

The motion of Mr. Atul Krishna Ghose that the demand under "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

**Khan [illegible] MOHAMMED ALI:** May I suggest that the original motion be put?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That depends on the House. Is there any objection to the original motion being put?

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** We have certainly great objection. It would simply be crushing the minority of its reasonable right of debate by the power of the majority vote. It is simply atrocious that such a suggestion could be made.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** My difficulty is that on the first day it was agreed to by the Leader of the House and by the Leader of the Opposition that on the day that we meet at 4-45, we may sit up till 8-30 and on the day we will meet at 4 we will sit up till 8 o'clock. Unless there is a unanimity on all sides I am afraid I may have to continue up till 8-30.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I rise on a point of order, Sir. I beg to draw attention to the fact that on a question like this there can be no question of opinion of the House. It is the right of the Opposition to carry on the debate as long as it likes. This is the Parliamentary practice.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** In any case I will give the fullest opportunity to all members of this House and in view of the agreement which has been arrived at, I think, on the question of adjournment it is entirely for the Speaker to give the decision. There is nobody who can interfere in this matter. The Speaker should see that his decision is in harmony and agreement with the opinion of all parties, and that no party is inconvenienced. The Leader of the House agreed to sit up to 8-30 on the day on which the Assembly meets at 4-45 and up to 8 on the day on which the Assembly meets at 4. I am afraid, I may have to continue up till 8-30.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Did I really agree to sit up to 8-30? I said that ordinarily we should sit up to 8, but if the business of the House requires that we should sit later, then we will continue up to 8-30. Not necessarily we will go on up till 8-30.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will look into the proceedings and see what actually happened.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** It was Sir Nazimuddin who assured us.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** On that basis I think as we sat on 4-45 we will sit up till 8-30.

**Mr. BIRENDRA KISHORE RAY CHOUDHURY:** I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 45,47,000 under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I rise to speak on this motion in order that I may have an opportunity of discussing the Government policy regarding the public health of this province. Sir, that the conditions of health in our countryside are unsatisfactory is well known to all. But we cannot understand rightly the havoc which malaria and other diseases are making in the rural areas of the province merely from the number of deaths brought about by them and recorded in the statistics. It should be always known that while 10 men may die, at least 100 are left in a condition of living death by these scourages. In fact from year to year our people are becoming increasingly devitalised because of the outbreak of the diseases which are not only preventible but which every Government must see prevented.

About 14 years ago the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das appreciated the seriousness of the conditions of our public health and became convinced that until they improved no constructive progress in any direction was possible in this province. Accordingly, in the Legislative Council of those days, he urged the Government to raise a loan and put into operation thereby a scheme for tackling comprehensively the problems of rural health. He actually suggested certain lines along which a comprehensive and an organic effort might be made for fighting and eradicating such diseases as malaria, kala-azar and cholera which had become such a menace to the development of the province. The Government of Bengal welcomed at that time his suggestions and made a promise to act up to them as best as they could. As an earnest of their promise the Government framed a scheme and proceeded to operate it gradually during the next few years. The most important item in this scheme was the gradual establishment of health units in every police thana. Actually with effect from the year 1927 the proposed health units were established and for the last few years they have been at work in every thana of the presidency. I cannot say that these units have been altogether useless. They have rendered some service to our afflicted brethren in the villages. But their contributions to the solution of the public health problems in our countryside have touched so far only the fringe of the subject.

At present every thana constitutes one unit and there is a provision for each unit of 1 Sanitary Inspector, 1 Assistant and 1 carrier. In order that this establishment may be maintained and that it may render the necessary services there is a provision for about Rs. 2,000 a year. This small staff with such insufficient funds at its disposal cannot be expected to deal with the health problems of such a large area as a thana with any show of efficiency. If any real work is expected of this organisation and if any real and permanent relief is to be

administered to the stricken people of our villages, it is essential that the unit must be made far smaller in size and the funds available must be considerably enlarged.

The services which the health units are called upon to perform are twofold in character. The staff of the units are expected to do everything possible both to prevent the outbreak of epidemics and to take necessary steps to keep them within bounds once they have unavoidably broken out. In order that the duty of prevention may be properly performed, it is essential that the staff must have correct knowledge as to the places which are prone to such epidemics and in order to prevent the outbreak there, it must take proper measures before the time for such outbreak arrives. Unfortunately the Sanitary Inspector is seldom found to exert himself as much as he is reasonably expected to do. He even does not deliver the lectures on sanitary subjects with the help of magic lanterns as he ought to do. Such lectures may certainly awaken the sanitary conscience of our people to a considerable extent. Unfortunately even this elementary duty has been uniformly neglected.

When the health units were first established, they were expected to work according to the advice of a local committee. But so far as I know such committees have nowhere been formed and consequently the Sanitary Inspector does his duties as he pleases.

I notice that in the budget estimate a provision of Rs. 1,50,000 for the reorganisation of rural public health units has been made. Of course this sum is not an addition to the total expenditure on account of the health units. In the revised estimate for 1937-38 the total expenditure under this head is shown to be Rs. 12,50,000 but in the estimate for 1938-39 it is Rs. 11 lakhs only and in addition Rs. 1,50,000 is provided for reorganising health units. I do not know what this reorganisation will actually mean and how it will be carried out. I shall be glad to be enlightened on this subject by the Hon'ble Minister in charge.

One of the other essential measures which the Government should undertake in this connection is the opening up of drains in our country-side. The task cannot be performed in a haphazard fashion. It can be properly performed only on the basis of a comprehensive, scientific scheme. Every village should be surveyed and a map prepared showing the major as well as the minor drains required for the outlet of the local water and filth. The union boards have no resources to undertake this work even on a very minor scale. Nor should such work be undertaken only on village or union basis. The scheme must be prepared on a provincial basis by the Government, and once of course, it is so prepared the local bodies may be called upon to co-operate with the Government both financially and as an executive agency. I acknowledge, Sir, that the working of the scheme will involve a heavy

expenditure. But if the province has to be saved, this expenditure must not be grudged.

The House, I hope, will excuse me if I make a reference to the havoc which malaria is making in my constituency of Eastern Mymensingh. The havoc which has been created for the last one year in Mymensingh is appalling in character. But unfortunately even ordinary medical aid is not available in most places. The supply of quinine without which no such aid can be given has fallen absolutely short. Private agencies are doing what they can to help the stricken people. But the disease is so widespread, its toll is so large that private efforts, however munificent, can do but little. I appeal to the Government to come forward without further loss of time with at least a free supply of quinine.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I shall be very brief in my reply. I will, first of all, explain the figures referred to by the mover of this cut motion. It is said that Rs. 1,50,000 have been shown in the budget estimate for giving effect to the reorganisation scheme, and that only Rs. 11 lakhs have been shown for the expenditure in the estimate for 1938-39 and the expenditure shown for the year 1937-38 is about Rs. 12,55,000. Now this is due to the fact that payments are made by way of advances and then accounts are adjusted. It may be that during the current year the arrears due by District Boards were to be paid and that is why the increased provision for that year the normal annual expenditure is about 11 lakhs and to it has been added Rs. 1,50,000 for giving partial effect to the reorganisation scheme. I hope I have now explained the figures.

Then he has raised many other points and lastly he has touched upon the havoc that has been created by malaria in his constituency. Government have done a great deal concerning the havoc that is being created in Mymensingh of late by malaria and they are trying their best to cope with the problem in co-operation with the District Board. I think this will satisfy the hon'ble the mover of this cut motion. As regards the other suggestions made by the hon'ble the mover, I shall try my best to study them with the help of my experts and I hope those suggestions will be helpful to me and my department in coming to a solution of this difficult question of the health problem of Bengal. With these remarks, Sir, I would request the hon'ble mover to withdraw his cut motion.

**Mr. BIRENDRA KISHORE RAY CHOUDHURY:** I beg leave of the House, Sir, to withdraw my motion.

The motion was then by leave of the House withdrawn.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali that a sum of Rs. 45,47,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" was then put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I understand that there is no objection to closing the debate now. Therefore I adjourn the House till 4-45 p.m. to-morrow.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-45 p.m. on Wednesday, the 23rd March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Wednesday, the 23rd March, 1938, at 4-45 p.m.

### Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 223 members.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

### (to which oral answers were given)

### Removal of the headquarters of the Noakhali district to Maijdi.

*268. **Mr. HARENDRA KUMAR SUR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether Government intend giving effect to their decision for the removal of the headquarters of the Noakhali district to Maijdi?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the courts and offices are likely to sit at Maijdi?

(*c*) If the Government intend not to remove the headquarters at Maijdi, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government intend to select some other suitable site for location of the permanent headquarters of the district?

(*d*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the approximate time when a declaration to that effect is likely to be made?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons why the progress of the Maijdi waterworks and the drainage schemes has been stopped?

**MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy):** (*a*) The matter is under the consideration of Government and it is hoped to arrive at a final decision by the end of this month.

(*b*) to (*d*) Do not arise.

(*e*) The works have been stopped for the present pending a final decision in the matter.

**Percentage of Mussalmans and Scheduled Castes in the Jessore Collectorate.**

*269. **Khan Sahib Maulana AHMED ALI ENAYETPURI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state the number of permanent and temporary clerks serving at present under the Collectorate of Jessore (including subdivisions)?

(*b*) How many of them are—

(1) Mussalmans,

(2) Caste Hindus,

(3) Scheduled Castes, and

(4) others?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of raising the percentage of Mussalmans and Scheduled Castes for such employments? If so, to what proportion?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** (*a*) and (*b*) A statement is placed in the Library.

(*c*) In this connection answer to clauses (*b*) and (*c*) of the unstarred Assembly question No. 54 may be seen.

**"Begar" lands in the settlement records in Burdwan.**

*270. **Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department aware that "*begar*" has been recorded by some proprietors of lands in the settlement records in respect to certain lands under their *raiyats* or under-*raiyats* in the district of Burdwan?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister also aware that rent is actually realised from lands recorded as "*begar*" lands?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, do the Government consider it desirable to take immediate steps for correcting the records?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** (*a*) There is mention of "*begar*" in the record-of-rights in respect to certain lands. This means labour in lieu of rent.

(*b*) No such cases have been brought to the notice of Government.

(*c*) Does not arise.

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there is any specific contract as to the amount of labour to be put in by the holders of the "*begar*" land?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** It depends on the facts of each particular case. No general statement can cover all cases.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any enquiry has been made by the Revenue Department after this question has been received?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Certainly; without enquiry I am not answering this question.

**Kazi EMDADUL HAQUE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state with reference to his answer (*a*) the nature and the extent of labour referred to?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Agricultural labour.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** We find the interpretation of "*begar*" is given in the answer as labour in lieu of rent. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the interpretation is given by the Government or by the zemindars?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** The interpretation is given by Government and probably also by the zemindars.

**Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government consider it desirable to abolish the system by legislation, if necessary?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** This is a question of opinion, and I do not propose to express any opinion.

### Water-hyacinth in the Basirhat subdivision.

***271. Khan Bahadur A. F. M. ABDUR RAHMAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture and Industries Department be pleased to state the area affected by water-hyacinth in the Basirhat subdivision?

(*b*) Was any scheme launched by Government to eradicate water-hyacinth from the subdivision? If not, why not?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of taking immediate steps in the matter?

**MINISTER in charge of the AGRICULTURE and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja Habibullah Bahadur of Dacca):** (*a*) The area affected by water-hyacinth in the Basirhat subdivision is about 4 miles in length in the Jamuna river and about one mile in Bithari Baor.

(*b*) and (*c*) Steps are already being taken for removal of water hyacinth in the subdivision, and the water-hyacinth in the Jamuna river has been partially cleared with the co-operation of the Union Boards and the Gobardanga Municipality. Arrangements are being made for a complete eradication of the pest in both the areas with the help of the Government of India grant for rural reconstruction.

**Amounts realised by the Forest Department as transit fees.**

***272. Maulvi MD. ABDUS SHAHEED:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest and Excise Department be pleased to state the amounts realised by the Forest Department as transit fees during the years 1934-35, 1935-36 and 1936-37?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware from reports that the realisation of this tax has been causing hardship to the tenants in these days of economic depression?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government are considering the desirability of modifying the transit rules?

**MINISTER in charge of the FORESTS and EXCISE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut):** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) No. Besides, such fees are the only effective check on the illicit extraction of forest produce.

(*c*) Does not arise.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of starred question No. 272, showing the amounts realised by the Forest Department as transit fees during the years 1934-35, 1935-36 and 1936-37.*

| Year. | Amount realised. |
|---|---|
| | Rs. |
| 1934-35 | ... 11,956 |
| 1935-36 | ... 14,695 |
| 1936-37 | ... 21,898 |

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the reduction in the amount between 1934-35 and 1936-37 is due to the decline in illicit extraction?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** No.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for the increase of this transit duties year by year?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** It is due to the detection that the amount varies.

**Forest officers and their establishments.**

*273. **Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forests and Excise Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing—

(1) the present number of Muslims and non-Muslims with their maximum grade working as—

(*i*) personal assistants, typists, draftsmen, permanent and temporary, of the Conservator's office; and

(*ii*) head clerks, clerks of different pays and temporary clerks in the Divisional Forest Offices in the Province; and

(2) the number of Muslims and non-Muslims with their maximum grade serving as—

(*i*) Forest Rangers in different grades; and

(*ii*) the Deputy Rangers and Foresters of different grades?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many men were taken in the different grades of the department during the last ten years from 1927 and how many of them are Muhammadans?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of raising the percentage of the Muslims?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** (*a*) A statement is laid on the Library table.

(*b*) 544 men were taken in the different grades of the Forest Department during the last ten calendar years from 1927, of which 87 were Muhammadans.

(*c*) The matter is receiving the attention of Government.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason why 87 out of 554 hands were taken from the Muslims?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** It is difficult to answer now, because this was done by the old Government.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why as it appears from the statement laid on the library table out of the officers mentioned in the question 59 only are Muslims out of 304?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Minister has already answered that the appointments were made by the old Government.

**Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any percentage has been fixed for the Muslims in this service?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** The matter is receiving the attention of Government.

## Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish and Natore Subdivisional Officer's prohibitory orders.

***273A. Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) Whether any orders were recently passed by the Subdivisional Officer, Natore, prohibiting the holding of public meetings in certain areas?

(*b*) If so, what are the nature of the orders and to what areas are they applicable?

(*c*) Whether it is a fact that as a result of the orders Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish was prevented from acting as Imam at the last Iduzzoha prayer at Mashunda, police-station Gurudaspur?

(*d*) Whether as a result of the aforesaid orders it has become impossible to hold meetings in furtherance of the tenants' movement and also to hold religious meetings?

(*e*) What action, if any, do the Government intend to take in the matter?

**MINISTER is charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Copies are placed on the library table.

(*c*) No. The order was not directed to prevent him from leading the prayers.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) The orders have been cancelled by the Subdivisional Officer.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Maulana Abdur Rashid approached Government for redress?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he was permitted to call a meeting on the 17th of March, 1938?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Maulana Abdur Rashid approached in March, 1938?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to make a full statement of the circumstances and the incidents that happened in connection with the arrest?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Orders under section 144 were served on the Maulana on the day of arrest and a discussion took place between him and the Subdivisional Officer who had gone there especially because of a wire sent by me to the Maulana asking him to go and see the Subdivisional Officer and apply for permission. The Subdivisional Officer after discussion with him till 5 p.m. permitted him to hold a meeting provided it was on religious subject but would not permit him to hold a meeting on any issue regarding the tenants. The meeting was dispersed, but they notified that there would be another meeting on the 24th and the Maulana was arrested at 8 p.m. for disobedience of orders under section 188.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that he was brought to the Court the day after his arrest and was put on trial immediately?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Maulvi ABDUL WAHAB KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government support the action of the Subdivisional Officer on the materials placed before them?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** So far as the materials are concerned, I have seen them and I think that a mistake has been made by the local officer. I have sent for the District Magistrate who is here and I am going into the matter thoroughly.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the order under section 144 was issued before the meeting was actually held?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** He was arrested in the evening at 8 p.m.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the meeting was actually held?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No; so far as the report goes, the meeting was not held.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how was it that the order was violated when no meeting was held?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** We have not yet received a report on this point.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the local officer is aware on whose behalf he went there to make a propaganda?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is an assumption.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Is it a fact that after he was released on bail under section 188, as soon as he came out of the court precincts he was again arrested under section 107 and taken to *hajat*?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state that on the charge under section 107 he was not granted

bail and was handcuffed in the open court and tied with a rope and taken to the Rajshahi Central Jail? (Cries of "shame, shame".)

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am not aware whether he was handcuffed or if he was tied with a rope, but adequate securities were demanded from him and as they could not be produced he was sent to *hajat*.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for the first order under section 144?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Because there was a no-rent campaign going on there.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Maulana was subsequently unconditionally released and the charges against him have been withdrawn?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Under whose orders have the charges been withdrawn in this case?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Government instructed the Public Prosecutor to withdraw this case.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there were materials before the Subdivisional Officer to hold that a no-rent campaign was going on there? If so, what are the materials?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It is not possible for me, in reply to a supplementary question, to put all the materials that were within the knowledge of the Subdivisional Officer which led him to pass this order.

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** The Hon'ble Minister says that a no-rent campaign was going on: will he kindly give the village, the thana or the subdivision in which this campaign was going on?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Yes, Gurudaspur thana.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed, your question was in the nature of a hypothetical question. You should have asked a specific question.

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, I based my question on a remark just made by the Home Minister and therefore I submit it was not a hypothetical question.

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state on what date these orders were cancelled by the Sub-divisional Officer?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Last Monday, I think 21st March.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government intends in the circumstances of the case to make a thorough enquiry into the matter?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Government on their own initiative have been making enquiries and have called for reports since the information reached us here about the arrest of the Maulana, and as the reports that have come in so far are not complete and further facts have to be elicited, Government wired and got the District Magistrate to come here to make further investigation, and if necessary, Government will depute an officer to visit that locality and make further enquiries. I can assure the House, however, that a most thorough investigation will be made.

## Point of Privilege.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** May I rise on a point of privilege, Sir? Yesterday you declared that Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha's cut motion on the medical budget was lost by 112 votes to 96. To-day's "Advance" has published with glaring head lines "The First Defeat of the Huq Ministry," "Heavy landslide among the Coalition," "Strength of the Opposition 112 against Government's 96." This, Sir, is a deliberately false and malicious propaganda carried on by "Advance." I make mention of this particularly inasmuch as the report of the "Advance"——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. Though you are entitled to mention a fact yet it is not permissible in regard to a matter arising out of privilege to attribute motives to anybody until that question has been decided by me.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Is it not a fact that the 1st of April is approaching?

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** No, Sir, it is still far off. So, I would request you, as a Custodian of the privileges of this House, to enquire into the matter and take what steps you think necessary, so far as this report in the "Advance" is concerned.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Well, it is not for me to say whether the First of April is approaching or not, because the member himself knows very well when it will approach. But I myself was surprised in the morning when my attention was drawn to this report in the "Advance." I took the matter to be very serious and I thought that it might be mentioned in the House to-day. Since then I have had an opportunity of receiving representatives of the Press and what they have said is this: The reporter in question is a gentleman who does not belong to this province. He was newly appointed and when the division results were announced there was clapping from the Opposition side at that moment, which all of you remember, and he took it that this clapping meant a defeat for Government and under this impression he reported that the motion was carried. I personally had an opportunity of discussing this matter with the representatives of this paper and I feel that while much can be said on the extremely careless manner in which this news was reported, I am prepared to believe that the newspaper immediately after realised its mistake and took all the necessary steps with a view to rectify it. My attention was drawn to this fact, not because of this statement, but because I found that my copy of the "Advance" was not received till about 10 o'clock this morning, and I was wondering what had happened. I sent for a copy from the hawkers and it was with difficulty that a copy could be procured for me from a very far-off place. These are facts personally known to me. After that representatives of this paper came and saw me. They said that they came to know of this mistake only when the "copy" was in the machine and about 500 copies were sent out for circulation. They immediately took steps to stop any further printing of this "copy" and they published a second edition of this paper which was placed before me. Considering the fact that I myself could not get the paper in time but had to wait for some time to get it—near about 10 o'clock—I was quite prepared to believe that the newspaper had taken all possible steps to rectify this blunder. At the same time I must say that a grave responsibility lies on the Press reporters in a matter like this, and I hope in future this will be a sufficient warning to all newspaper reporters, and that they should not write from their privileged position in this House anything except what they actually see for themselves in any matter concerning the proceedings of this House. For the time being, however, I am satisfied that it is an extremely careless act on the part of the newspaper reporter concerned, but on the facts before me, I am equally satisfied that the matter is not such as to deserve any further notice

from us except an admonition from me that any such careless act on the part of any paper will meet with adequate and the severest step. I have carefully gone into the matter and I not only saw the representatives of the paper but I saw the reporter in question also. I had therefore an opportunity of judging him personally and from all the facts and circumstances I feel that I should not take any further notice except to say that the newspaper will take the earliest possible opportunity of narrating the circumstances which caused this blunder in a prominent place in its next issue and give publicity to it. In the meantime I have also received a second edition of the paper which was brought before me for my perusal, from which the offending head lines were excised.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** May I bring to your notice the fact that this was knowingly and deliberately done, because in the concluding portion of the column it is stated that the cut-motion was lost, and the grant was fully voted? That shows that there is no substance in the plea of ignorance taken up by the reporter.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** At any rate it is my decision that the explanation is satisfactory and we need not take any further notice of this unhappy affair.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Sir, the mischief has already been done, because already a large number of this paper has been circulated in the mufassil and I do not know how the mischief which has been done by this circulation can be undone.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will be undone by the fact that the Huq Ministry has not resigned.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I can say this much that if I was not satisfied with all the facts and circumstances, I would have taken proper notice and would have considered whether the reporter concerned should be given the facilities of taking report of our proceedings. But I have got to take into account not merely the motive and intention but also other human factors. Taking all these into consideration I have been fully satisfied that so far as the reporter is concerned, he is a man working with all his faults, and we should give him the benefit to the frailties of human nature and its weaknesses and not be carried away by any idea that punishment should be meted out to each and every case of negligence or inaccuracy. I have given sufficient warning to the man concerned and the representatives of the newspaper are prepared to publish an apology in to-morrow's issue. As regards the mischief, it is beyond my control.

## DEMANDS FOR GRANT.

### "40—Agriculture."

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 15,36,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture."

With your permission may I correct a printing error on page 11? The word should be "project" instead of "budget."

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I beg to move that the demand made by the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture be reduced by a sum of Rs. 100 to raise a discussion on the administration of the Department of Agriculture and the failure of Government to undertake a comprehensive plan for the improvement of agriculture and the condition of the agriculturists.

In moving this motion, I must say, I am weighed with the fulness of heart that a subject like this deserves and I submit that the Hon'ble Minister and the party behind him will take it not so much as a political clap-trap but as a statement of a genuine worker in the cause of the country who is anxious to see that his countrymen are lifted up from the position they are put to at the moment. The harrowing condition of our villages needs no argument. Every one of us knows fully well the difficulties experienced in the village because of the uneconomic character of agriculture at the moment. Agriculture, Sir, has ceased to be a remunerative occupation. In fact, as the Statutory Report of the Reserve Bank of India on the Agricultural Credit Department states, "Agriculture is not so much of a profession to-day as a mere mode of living," because there is no other alternative. In a situation like this, mere copy-book preachings or white paper statements,—I must not say white lies—will not solve the situation. We are anxious to see the situation tackled with boldness, we are anxious to see that measures are taken now and without delay to improve the condition of the tenants and the agriculturists. The statement circulated by the Hon'ble Minister has, at most, given us a picture of certain things that he has got in his mind, in his imagination. I must say, this statement has not at all been convincing about the steps taken so far and the steps that are immediately before us in improving the lot of the agriculturists. The present-day position of agriculture is deplorable. Agriculture, as I have already said, which is the sole stay of practically the whole of Bengal's population, does not bring even sufficient return to cover the costs thereof. The average yield, as we had some time ago occasion to discuss, does not pay the agriculturist even for his own

maintenance for a few months beyond the harvesting season. The tenants, as a result, are increasingly being thrown out of land, and in many parts of Bengal, as the Hon'ble the Finance Minister himself has stated, cultivation is being given up and depopulation is setting in. In others, the pressure on land is increasing to an appalling extent and the result thereof is a situation that is threatening the very existence of the people.

As human power has deteriorated due to malaria, malnutrition and social conditions so has also the live-stock, the other important agency or power with which we produce from land. Then again, the quality of land has deteriorated and along with it all the instruments of production. The primitive implements, the seeds that have been of a very poor character have remained as they were and credit facilities have not improved in the least. Communications continue to be extremely difficult, and on the top of all that, taxation, rent and other levies continue to be highly burdensome. That being the position at the present moment, we have to examine the activities of the Agriculture Department in the light of these circumstances. I submit, Sir, that the Department of Agriculture has miserably failed to tackle the problems and that it has not even touched the fringe of the problem. The difficulties of course have been manifold. Some of them, the Hon'ble Minister himself has admitted in his note. The officers and the staff of the department have not only not got the requisite qualification for the kind of jobs they have got to do, and they have not got the requisite experience, but also they have not, so far as the lower staff is concerned, the requisite number to handle the problems to any appreciable extent. The administration continues to be top-heavy, in so far as there is hardly any real work to be done by the Director of Agriculture and his Assistant, whereas at the bottom there is a complete dearth of sufficient number of men to handle district farms, the expansion of which has been checked and there are no assistants to the District Officers or Superintendents in charge of farms so that they might be available for doing a little bit of propaganda work without which farm work becomes absolutely meaningless. There is a complete lack of planning so far as scientific research work is concerned, and from the report of the Department of Agriculture we notice that the scientific studies that they have so far been carried on have not in all cases very much connection with the life of this province. As the studies that are carried on have not been co-ordinated as between one department and another, so also between the research section and the farm section there is not so much of interconnection maintained, and the studies of the research section are not actually put into operation in the farms. And those who are in charge of the farms do not have any opportunity of spreading the information to the actual cultivators in the village. This lack of co-ordination in the different sections of the department is not the only difficulty

under which the department is labouring. There is also lack of co-ordination between Agriculture, Veterinary, Co-operative, Public Health, Irrigation and Communications Departments, all of which are so much interrelated that they cannot be divorced one from the other. In fact, in the United States of America there is one Secretary of State who looks after all these different departments because they realise their essential unity of purpose. Agricultural education is sadly neglected. The man in charge have not the requisite qualifications. In fact, I know at least of one officer who is now the Inspector of Agricultural Education, who has not even got the matriculation certificate and who has never undergone any kind of practical training or education in any Agricultural Institute. Jobberies are going on galore. I have pointed out in connection with various questions put in this House to the Hon'ble Minister, how patronage and jobbery have been permitted to continue in this department to the detriment of efficiency. This being the position, we have to judge the action of the present Government not so much with regard to their future promises, but with reference to their past achievements. A comprehensive policy is needed, and a policy which can be seen now, a policy which can be made effective in no time. Two or three thousand rupees provided for small projects here and there with big names behind them will not satisfy any section of the House and any section of our countrymen. The two outstanding questions that are engaging every section of this House and everyone outside are the questions of depressed prices of our agricultural produce, and the question of improvement of the net yield per unit of land and unit of human efforts.

So far as the question of prices is concerned, this Government has not as yet given us any indication of policy in maintaining or in raising the prices of agricultural produce—such as rice, sugarcane and jute. I shall not detain the House long on this question, because I presume there will be a full dress debate on some subsequent motion in this connection. As regards jute, I have given most careful and anxious thought to the question of fixing or retaining a reasonably high price for it. I must submit and accept with all humility that there are genuine difficulties in the way. I must do so because I did, when I realized these difficulties, go up to reputed Professors to obtain some light. You might be knowing one of them who came here in connection with the Science Congress, Professor J. A. Venn of the Queen's College, Cambridge, who had a good deal to do with the measures taken in Great Britain in securing higher prices for Great Britain's agricultural products since 1928. Professor Venn I consulted on several occasions, and having obtained his expert advice and having the special conditions of my country in my mind, I came to the conclusion that prices of jute certainly can be raised if only we are prepared to adopt bold measures, although so far as the method was concerned there

might be some difference of opinion. It is extremely regrettable that the Government has not taken any steps so far for the maintenance of some reasonable price of jute. If there was time, I would have given the House my own scheme of maintaining fair prices for this important commodity. I hope a future occasion will be found to permit me to place my views *in extenso*. I do not believe, Sir, there will be any difficulty in the way of the Government if instead of emphasising the method of restriction of production, attempts are made to control the price of jute at the top, that is to say, at the place where the jute is ultimately sold to those who are the actual consumers, namely, the mill-owners and the big purchasers at the exporting centre. In whatever province jute is produced,—Bengal, Bihar or Assam,—jute must ultimately pass on to the jute mills or to foreign countries through the exporters. If we can fix a minimum price payable by the exporters and the jute mill-owners, assuring them in return that their reasonable margin of profit would be maintained,—by so arranging things that the hessian price in the world market is maintained sufficiently high,—I suppose there will be no difficulty in evolving a practicable and reasonable scheme. I have the essentials of this scheme for ensuring a fair price of jute drawn up, and I shall place these before experts whenever necessary.

So far as the cultivators are concerned, if we want to give real benefit to them and not to middlemen, we will have to establish a number of "regulated markets"—not on an experimental basis of a few scattered markets here and there—so that the benefits of a rise in the price at the mills and exporting centres may be passed on to them. I have studied the arrangements made in the regulated markets of Berar and Bombay. I have also had occasion to examine the suggestions made in a very beautiful book recently written by a Professor of the Lucknow University on Agricultural Marketing in Northern India. I agree with him generally when he says that only restrictions on the cultivation of jute for pushing up prices will fail to achieve the objective. We have, therefore, to think of other methods. Measures should also be taken to ensure fair price for rice and sugarcane. But more important than the question of fixation of prices is the problem of improving agricultural production, and for this all possible steps should be taken. I have suggested some comprehensive plan in this regard as proposed in a resolution of which I gave notice.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I propose, other factors remaining what they are, to close this debate about 7-15. So, the debate will go on till 7 o'clock when the Hon'ble Minister will reply. I think it will be convenient

if two or three motions of more or less allied nature are moved, and after that the debate will be open.

**Maharaja SASHI KANTA ACHARYYA CHOUDHURY, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not wish to move the cut motion, but I want to speak generally on this subject.

Sir, we have had a lot of research and experimental things done in experimental farms in different provinces and also in this province. But up to now we have had no demonstration farms. Sir, we do not know exactly what is being carried on there nor do we know what are the results of their experiments and their research.

With regard to the education of agriculture to the tenantry, Sir, they should be taught how one crop should follow another, I mean they should be taught the rotation of crops. Besides that, Sir, they should also be taught the advantages and disadvantages of using seeds grown on their own land. Sir, some seeds that are grown in their land produce less crop than if they get the same seed from another land.

With regard to the jute restriction problem, Sir, I do not think any kind of propaganda would be of much avail, but what I would suggest is that the tenantry should be taught what substitute crops could be grown for jute, and also what crops they could grow between their main crops. In Bengal, Sir, the tenant does not know how to grow other crops. So, we generally find out of the year almost six months he remains idle, because he has nothing to do. If a substitute crop could be made available to him which he could grow in those six months, it would go a great deal in restricting jute.

Sir, with regard to the cattle improvement, some bulls are supplied, but no care is being taken by Government to keep them in specified areas. I doubt whether they will be of any benefit at all. Sir, they will only go and join the masses and become bad themselves. Where bulls are supplied, an area should be fixed and all other bulls in that locality should be castrated.

Sir, as regards the cattle also, we require two different species; one to supply us with milk, and the other mainly for the use of draft. I do not know, Sir, whether the bulls that have been supplied are for the milking purposes or for the improvement of draft cattle. Besides that, Sir, Bengal cow is very small, whereas the foreign bulls from the Punjab and other places are rather big, and I do not think they will suit one another.

Sir, with regard to agriculture becoming unprofitable, it is mainly due I should say to the agricultural plots becoming smaller and smaller day by day, whereas the population is increasing day by day, and the more division there is in the different holdings, the more land has to

be kept in waste for demarcation of the different plots, so a lot of land is being lost in that way also.

Sir, there is also a programme, I find, for distribution of seeds. I do not know, Sir, if in return anything good is to be expected from that distribution, or is it only a sort of propaganda that the seeds are given and nothing to be heard beyond that.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of information. Are we to understand that those who are supporting Government are allowed to move their cut motions?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** They can move their motions but they should not call for a division. They may simply speak for the purpose of drawing attention to or narrating the grievances.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Was that what we understood by your ruling?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I made it abundantly clear that it would be better constituted propriety in a party system of Government, if they do not move at all. But I would leave the matter for the party and party members to decide for themselves if they would or would not do it. As a matter of fact, this rigid convention has brought in a spirit of grievances, even in England, that this shuts out members a valued opportunity to ventilate grievances.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** And it makes discussions unreal.

**Mr. SPEAKER.** Who knows that the Coalition party may not be rebels to-morrow and may be deprived of the opportunity of speaking in this House.

**Maulvi MUHAMMAD ABDUR RASHEED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not moving my motion but I will generally speak on the question. The relief of the peasantry is the chief concern of all Governments and should be particularly of the present Government in which the Proja interest is so largely represented. One of the chief items in our programme is the relief of the agriculturists from the burden of indebtedness under which they are groaning. Debt Settlement Boards have been established practically all over the province and are functioning. How far these Boards will be successful in the task we do not know, but even assuming that they succeed in reducing the existing indebtedness of the agriculturist, they cannot solve the problem of their future difficulties and requirements. It is well known that the

staying powers of the Bengal peasants and particularly those of Western Bengal is practically nil. During the cultivation season, the average agriculturist requires money sometimes to buy cattle or seeds—but generally for the maintenance of his family till harvest time comes. This assistance he used to get previously from the village mahajans though the latter used to charge exorbitant rates of interest, they gave temporary relief to cultivators from their difficulties. Now that the Relief of Agricultural Indebtedness Act is in force, mahajans will not advance any money to the agriculturists; and unless some other agency comes forward to help them at the time of their needs, the condition of the cultivators will become miserable. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that Government should take steps to come to their aid when they require financial help. Sir, under the Agriculturists Loans Act, Government gives out loans when there is famine or distress in any particular area, but the conditions under which and the manner in which these advances are made will not serve the purpose which I have in view in discussing this question. As I have mentioned before, agriculturist requires temporary assistance at the time of cultivation. The money they borrow then, can be recovered from them when the crops are harvested. Government should make arrangements to give them this assistance at the proper time through Union Boards and on easy terms. As an experimental measure, I suggest that a certain amount be placed at the disposal of the Collector to be utilised for this purpose. We have created a permanent fund of 10 lakhs of rupees for famine relief, and if famine means as it does mean in these days of easy communication, scarcity of money, Bengal peasant suffers from severe famine every year during the cultivation season, and we ought to create another special fund for the relief of this annual famine. The Debt Settlement Boards which we have started if properly worked, will systematise agriculturist debts and tell them exactly how and how much they will have to pay. The proposed Land Mortgage Banks will help them in liquidating their accumulated debts as settled by the Debt Settlement Boards, but in order that they may not have to incur fresh debts from the local mahajans for their maintenance and existence during cultivation season, it is absolutely necessary that we should create another fund for advancing short period loans to the village cultivators without or with nominal interest. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture in the White Paper that he has circulated says under the head "Assistance to cultivators" that this subject, Sir, does not come within his jurisdiction. Sir, the Famine Relief Fund has been created primarily for the village cultivators and that fund is controlled by the Revenue Department. I do not understand why the Agricultural Department cannot have another fund for its own department. If it be convenient to transfer the subject to the Co-operative Department, we have no objection, but I do not find any reason why the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture cannot in consultation with his honourable colleague of

the Co-operative Department make an clear-cut pronouncement regarding this matter. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture has enumerated in his White Paper the many schemes he has formulated for improved seeds, improved implements and improved agriculture on scientific lines. With due respect to the Hon'ble Minister, I submit that he has caught the wrong end of the stick. Existence first and improvement next. Let them exist and then they will improve. I am strongly of opinion that if this very necessary fund be not created immediately, I mean simultaneously with the Debt Settlement Boards, the Land Mortgage Banks and co-operative facilities, the entire agriculture population of Bengal will in no time be transformed into agricultural labour, because village mahajans will not lend them money any more and in order to get the money they need for their food during cultivation season, they will have to sell their landed interests to the mahajans and then at last by and by the lands will pass on to the mahajans. With these words, Sir, I resume my seat in the hope that the Hon'ble Minister in consultation with his colleague of the Co-operative Department or any other department which he may think necessary, will tell us something on this point on behalf of the Government.

**Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 15,36,000 be reduced by Rs. 100 for which I raise discussion about the grievances of the cultivators.

Sir, I think every member of this House has an idea about the so-called Government Agricultural farms established in the different parts of the province. Sir, Government take up some lands within the municipal area or in the vicinity of the municipal area and start demonstration farms appointing some officers who practically take no interest to acquaint the cultivators with the modern forms of cultivation. The money given under the head "Agriculture" is misused for the construction of some buildings and in paying high salaries to the officers appointed who enjoy without any cost free supply of vegetable products produced in these gardens. These farm officers never distribute seeds or manures to the actual cultivators, and they never teach the tillers of the soil any scientific or improved methods of cultivation. In this way Government maintains some officers only by the money budgeted for agriculture or in the name of agriculturists, without doing any good whatsoever to the real tillers of the soil. This money can be better utilised if given to the cultivators as short-term loans without interest. Sir, the province of Bengal is almost purely an agricultural country and the work of cultivation is being done by poor and illiterate tillers of the soil from time immemorial without knowing any improved or scientific method of cultivation. So Bengal cannot prosper until and unless scientific methods of cultivation are introduced. Sir, these illiterate, poor cultivators form

90 per cent. of the total population of the province; they form the nation; they are the backbone of the country and so the grievances of the cultivators are practically the grievances of the nation. What are their grievances, Sir? These are their bare necessaries of life, namely, their education, santitation and settlement of debts.

Much has been said and discussed about primary education for these poor cultivators, Sir. So, I need not say anything more about this again. But primary education is essentially necessary for the cultivators. I like to say a few words only about their sanitation, i.e., rural sanitation. Their sufferings for want of medicine at the time of their illness and their sufferings for want of pure drinking water, especially in the months of Chaitra, Baisakh and Jaistha, know no bounds. So, Sir, there should be an arrangement for sufficient water-supply, and charitable dispensaries should be established in the villages and unions without delay.

These cultivators, Sir, are over head and ears in debt. So, for settlement of their debts, Government should grant them loans either without any interest at all or at a nominal interest. These are their grievances in short, Sir, which Government, I think, can very easily redress.

As the cultivators form 90 per cent. of the population of the province, so 90 per cent. or a vast majority of the members of this House too represent them. That being the case, Sir, if the representatives of the cultivators be united, nothing can be impossible for them in the matter of redressing the grievances of the cultivators. Bengal cannot prosper, Sir, unless and until these grievances of the cultivators are removed, and the scientific method of cultivation is introduced in the province without delay, and the education, economic and political status of the cultivators is improved.

So, Sir, it is the legal and moral duty of the representatives of the cultivators in this House to work unitedly in order to ameliorate their conditions and discharge their duty in this respect. Sir, I humbly appeal to them to do the needful.

With these few words, Sir, I beg to move my motion, and I think the whole House will support this motion of mine.

**Mr. SYED HASAN ALI CHOWDHURY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, might I request you to allow Mr. Maqbul Hossain to move the motion standing in the name of Mr. Ramizuddin Ahmed, viz., No. 254?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Then Mr. Maqbul Hossain is not going to move his own motion?

**Mr. SYED HASAN ALI CHOWDHURY:** No, Sir.

**Mr. MAQBUL HUSAIN:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 15,36,000 under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the desirability of restricting jute production by legislation and fixing the minimum price at Rs. 10.

মাননীয় সভাপতি সাহেব, এই ছাটাই প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন প্রসঙ্গে আমি সর্বপ্রথম House এর নিকট এই কথাই নিবেদন করবো যে বাংলার হতভাগ্য নাছিড় ও নিপীড়িত কৃষককে ফাঁকি দিয়ে একদল ব্যবসায়ী যে ভাবে শোষণ কোরছে তাতে বাংলার কৃষক তিলে তিলে মৃত্যুর দিকে অগ্রসর হচ্ছে। পাটের নিম্নতম মূল্য যদি আইন কোরে নির্দ্দিষ্ট কোরে দেওয়া না হয়—তাহলে দেশে অচিরে যে বিপ্লব দেখা দিবে, কৃষকদের মধ্যে যে বিদ্রোহভাব আসবে তাতে দেশময় ভয়ানক অশান্তির অনলশিখা প্রজ্জ্বলিত হবে। এবং সেই অশান্তি ও বিদ্রোহ দমন কোরতে গভর্ণমেণ্টের তোপ-কামান, গোলা গুলি যত আছে তাতে কুলাবে না। পাটের দর যখনই নির্দ্দিষ্ট করবার কথা উত্থাপন করা হয় তখনি সরকার পক্ষ হ'তে বলা হয় যে বাংলার বাহিরে বেহার উড়িষ্যা ও আসামেও পাট উৎপন্ন হয়। আমি House এর নিকট এই কথা নিবেদন করবো যে বাংলার বাহিরে—বেহার, উড়িষ্যা ও আসামে যে পাট উৎপন্ন হয় তার পরিমাণ শতকরা মাত্র ১০ ভাগ, অর্থাৎ শতকরা ৯০ ভাগ পাটই বাংলায় উৎপন্ন হয়। কাজেই যদি বাংলা দেশে পাটের দর নির্দ্দিষ্ট কোরে দেওয়া হয় তাহলে বেহার, উড়িষ্যা, আসাম প্রভৃতি বাংলার বাহিরে যে সমস্ত জায়গায় পাট হয় সেই সমস্ত জায়গায় যদি jute restriction কিম্বা পাট নিয়ন্ত্রন বা দর নির্দ্দিষ্ট কোরে নাও দেওয়া হয় তাহলেও বাংলার পাট যে প'ড়ে থাকবে এরূপ ধারনা করা বা যুক্তির অবতারনা করা সম্পূর্ণ অসঙ্গত ও ভুল। আমি যে ছাটাই প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত কোরেছি, আমার মনে হয়, এই House আমার এই প্রস্তাব সমর্থন কোরবেন এবং এর পক্ষে ভোট দিবেন। কারণ বিগত নির্ব্বাচনের সময় প্রত্যেক নির্ব্বাচিত প্রতিনিধি তাদের নির্ব্বাচন প্রার্থনায় ভোটারদের নিকট এই প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছেন, "যদি আমি নির্ব্বাচিত হতে পারি—তাহলে আমি ব্যবস্থা পরিষদ কিম্বা ব্যবস্থাপক সভায় যেয়ে প্রথমে পাটের একটা নিম্নতম মূল্য নির্দ্দিষ্ট করবো।" পাটের নিম্নতম মূল্য কি হবে তা নির্দ্ধারণ করবার জন্য আমি এই কথা নিবেদন করবো যে পাট চাষ কোরে চাষীর যা খরচ হয় সেই খরচ বাদ দিয়া একটা reasonable profit দিয়ে পাটের মূল্য নির্দ্ধারণ করা উচিত। বাংলার Jute Enquiry কমিটির রিপোর্টের ১৮২ পৃষ্ঠায় দেখা যায় যে পাট উৎপন্ন করিতে চট্টগ্রাম বিভাগে একর প্রতি নিম্নোক্তরূপ খরচ হয়। Director of Agriculture লোকপ্রতি ৸৹ বার আনা এবং এক জোড়া গরুর ৸৹ বার আনা মজুরী ধরিয়া হিসাব করিয়াছেন। Jute Enquiry Committee উৎপন্ন পাটের পরিমান একর প্রতি ১২/- এবং প্রতিমণ পাট বিক্রয় করিয়া কৃষক গড়ে ৫৲ টাকা পায় বলিয়া মন্তব্য করিয়াছেন।

| | | টা: | আ: |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cost of human labour (মানুষের খাটুনী খরচ) | ... | ৬১ | ৮ |
| Bullock power (গরুর খাটুনী খরচ) | ... | ২১ | ১২ |
| Seed (বীজ) .. | ... | ৩ | ৫ |
| Manure (সার) ... | .. | ১০ | ০ |
| Rent (খাজানা) ... | ... | ৬ | ০ |
| মোট | ... | ১০২ | ৪ |

মোট ১০২৷৹ প্রতি একারে খরচ হয়, তাহলে দেখা যায় বিঘা প্রতি ৩৪৲ টাকার একটু বেশী খরচ হয় এর উপর একটা যুক্তিসঙ্গত লাভ যা এই House বা Legislature দেওয়া ভালো মনে করেন

সেই ভাবে দেবার জন্য আমি এই প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন কোরেছি। বর্ত্তমানে jute restriction যে ভাবে করা হচ্ছে যে ভাবে তার জন্য প্রতি বৎসর অজস্র টাকা খরচ করা হচ্ছে তাকে আমি অপব্যয় বলবো। এই ভাবে jute restriction এদেশে সম্ভব হবে না। যাহোক, jute restriction বা পাট চাষ নিয়ন্ত্রণ করবার জন্য আমি House এর member দের নিকট বোলছি যে পাটের বাজার নিয়ন্ত্রণ এবং মণ প্রতি নিম্নতম মূল্য নির্দ্ধারণ করা সম্বন্ধে কৃষক প্রজা পার্টির সেক্রেটারী মিঃ আবুহোসেন সরকার যে বিল উত্থাপন কোরেছেন সেই বিল যদি পাশ করা হয়, সেই বিলটী যদি কার্য্যে পরিণত করা হয়, আইনে পরিণত করা হয় তাহলে আমার মনে হয় সমগ্র বাংলা দেশের পাট চাষীদের অভাব, অভিযোগ দূরীভূত হবে। পাটের নিম্নতম মূল্যে নির্দ্ধারণ করা সম্বন্ধে যখনই কথা ওঠে তখনি বলা হয় যে পাটের শ্রেণী বিভাগ নির্দ্দিষ্ট নাই। কিন্তু, Bengal Jute Enquiry Committee এর report এ দেখা যায় যে তার ভিতর ৪ শ্রেণীর নাম আছে।— (voices and interruption যথা Top, medium, bottom and rejection (উচ্চ, মধ্যম, নিম্ন এবং ফেরৎ)। কাজেই আমার মনে হয় উক্ত রিপোর্টে যে ভাবে শ্রেণী বিভাগ করা হয়েছে সেই ভাবে পাটের নিম্নতম দর যদি নির্দ্দিষ্ট করা হয়—এবং সেই দর মণ প্রতি ১০৲ টাকা ১২৲ টাকা বা ১৫৲ টাকা যাহাই নির্দ্দিষ্ট কোরে দেওয়া হউক না কেন তাহলে এ দেশের কৃষকদের অভাব, অভিযোগ দূরীভূত হবে এবং তাদের মুখে হাসি ফুটে উঠবে। কাজেই, আমার মনে হয় যে প্রস্তাব আমি উপস্থিত কোরেছি তা এই হাউসের প্রত্যেক মেম্বর, হয়তো শ্বেতাঙ্গ মেম্বাররা আমার প্রস্তাবের পক্ষে ভোট নাও দিতে পারেন, তাছাড়া প্রত্যেকেই আমার প্রস্তাব সমর্থন করবেন। পরিশেষে আমার নিবেদন এই যে আপনারা প্রত্যেকে এ সম্বন্ধে একটু ভাববেন। আপনারা একথা মনে কোরবেন না যে, আমাদের এপক্ষ হতে যখন এ প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন করা হয়েছে তখন সে প্রস্তাবে আপনারা অপর পক্ষ ভোট দিবেন না। ভালো জিনিষ গরীবের উপকারের প্রস্তাব যদি অপর পক্ষ থেকেও উত্থাপন করা হয় তাহলে সেটা সমর্থন করা প্রত্যেকের কর্ত্তব্য। আমি আমাদের পার্টির পক্ষ থেকে আপনাদের নিকট এই কথা বলতে চাই যে, আপনারা যখনই এই রকম কোন জনহিতকর প্রস্তাব উত্থাপন কোরবেন তখনই আমরা তাহা সমর্থন কোরবো এবং ভোট দিবো। আমরা এখানে বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টকে ধ্বংশ কোরতে আসিনি ( hear, hear ) যদি বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট দ্বারা কৃষক, তথা গরীবের উপকার হয় তাহলে আমরা এই গভর্ণমেণ্টকে রাখবো, আর যদি গরীবের উপকার না হয় তাহলে এই গভর্ণমেণ্টকে আমরা ধ্বংশ কোরে দিবো। বর্ত্তমানে যে ভাবে পাট বিক্রয় হচ্ছে, পাটের ব্যবসায়ে যে ভাবে অনাচার হ'চ্ছে, সে অনাচার বন্ধ যদি না হয় তাহলে কৃষক সমাজ একেবারে ধ্বংশ হোয়ে যাবে। তাদের আর বাঁচবার উপায় থাকবে না। কাজেই আমি আপনাদের নিকট এই অনুরোধ কোরছি যে, আপনারা এই প্রস্তাব সমর্থন কোরে কৃষকদের বাঁচিয়ে রাখুন।

**Haji SAFIRUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, I beg to say that Bengal is an agricultural country; most of her people are agriculturists. It is the desire of everybody inside and outside the House that the deplorable condition of the cultivators is improved, the question of their *dal bhat* is solved and their indebtedness is removed. But how to solve these questions? In my opinion all these problems can be solved by the improvement of the cattle of the cultivators. Cattle is the most valuable asset of the cultivators, without the improvement of which nothing can be done towards the amelioration of the condition of the

peasants of Bengal. The cultivators are regarded as the backbone of the country and it can be legitimately said that cattle is the backbone of the cultivators.

The poverty and the indebtedness of the cultivators are mainly due to the fact that they have no stout and strong bullocks for their ploughs, they have some lean, thin and weak bullocks. Good preparation and well manuring of the field are the two main things for cultivation. Cowdung is the best manure and it is less expensive. They have to borrow money every year to purchase the bullocks at a high rate of interest and the greater part of their yearly income is taken away by the mahajans leaving almost nothing for their maintenance.

Bengal depends mainly on Bihar for the supply of cattle. Lakhs and lakhs of rupees are taken away by the Biharies every year. This drainage of money should be stopped. Otherwise it is hopeless to cry for the improvement of the cultivators. Government is spending much money for the purchase of stud bulls from the Punjab. The lean, thin and weak cows of Bengal are quite unable to bear the services of those bulls and do not produce good calves. The bulls and cows of good origin should be brought and cattle breeding farm should be established at least one in each thana and cattle should be supplied to cultivators at a low price. In this way within a few years the improvement of the cattle can be done and the grievances of the cultivators will be removed.

Now, Sir, let us turn to the other aspect of the question. Malaria has overtaken the country. Quinine is distributed freely among the poor cultivators. But, Sir, you know that effect of quinine is very dangerous without milk. The poor cultivators generally go without milk. Thus, Sir, we see that the health and wealth of the cultivators depends mainly on cattle.

The establishment of the debt conciliation boards will do little good. What the debt conciliation boards will do unless the agriculturist has a surplus income after meeting their most urgent and pressing needs?

For the improvement of cultivation, for the better quality and quantity of crops reference has been made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister for scientific method of cultivation; but it would be very difficulty for the poor and illiterate cultivators to have recourse to that. Provision has been made for propaganda work and demonstration of farming methods. But, Sir, may I ask who will prepare the field for farming purposes? I fail to understand the purpose for which the agriculture farms are established. Are these farms established to help the cultivators or to make profits for the Government? None of these purposes are served. They absolutely do no good to the cultivators nor do they bring any profit to the Government. These are sheer waste of money. The cultivators of Bengal know how to cultivate their lands. They are in want of materials for cultivation. Sir, supply them with

materials and you will see they will create wonderful results. Sir, the Department of Agriculture is doing absolutely no good to the peasants. It failed to diagnose the disease the cultivators are suffering from. Sir, there is no dearth of *Proja Bandhoos* at the present day. Of course they have become so with a motive behind. Since the beginning of the present constitution up till now no good has been done to the cultivators. The only beneficial thing, the Bengal Tenancy Act amendment, is still on the anvil and we do not know what shape it will take.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister in his written budget speech touched the problem of the improvement of livestock. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture also said many things regarding the improvement of cattle. I thank them for their appreciation of the importance of cattle but I am sorry they failed to make adequate provisions for the purpose.

Mere propaganda by fixing the posters on the walls "যদি বেশী টাকা চান তবে পাট চাষ কমান" ইত্যাদি will not improve the condition of the cultivators. The department of jute restriction propaganda is doing nothing. Sir, to meet the grievances of the jute-growing cultivators I earnestly appeal to the Government for finding out the market and bringing forward a Jute-Controlling Act. Sir, in my opinion, rural uplift is possible by making provision for pasture lands, provision for manuring the field, and provision for cattle breeding and by finding out market for important agricultural commodities.

Sir, in this connection, one thing may be mentioned that cattle disease has taken its virulent type in the province. To cope with that, in every thana at least one veterinary dispensary should be established.

Sir, in conclusion, I beg to remind the Government of the learned saying: "A bold peasantry, their country's pride, when once destroyed can never be supplied."

**Maulvi RAJIBUDDIN TARAFDAR:**

অনারেবল নবাব বাহাদুর কৃষি বিভাগের জন্য ১৫,৩৬,০০০ টাকা মঞ্জুরী চাহিতেছেন তাহা লইয়া বিতর্ক উপস্থিত হইয়াছে, আমার মতে সবচেয়ে দরকারী হ'লো কৃষি বিভাগ, কারন একে বাদ দিলে আর সব Department অকেজো হ'য়ে যায় কিন্তু এই কৃষি বিভাগ সম্বন্ধে আবহমানকাল থেকে আমি একটা বৈষম্যের ভাব লক্ষ্য করিয়া আসিতেছি এই কৃষি বিভাগের যে পোর্ট-ফলিও তাহা যে সব লোকের হাতে দেওয়া হয় তারা হয় জমিদার না হয় রাজা কিম্বা নবাব সুবা অথবা স্যার নাইটের দল (এই সময় চতুঃর্দিক হইতে ছিয়ার ছিয়ার শব্দ হতে থাকে) আমি জানি এই বিভাগ আগে ছিল অনারেবল নবাব নবাব আলী চৌধুরী সাহেবের হাতে। তার পরে স্যার গজনবী ও নবাব স্যার কারোকী সাহেবের হাতে আসে, এখন যাঁর হাতে পড়েছে তিনিও হলেন একজন নবাব বাহাদুর। (এই সময় চতুঃর্দিক হ'তে ছিয়ার, ছিয়ার শব্দ হয়) তার পরে এই বিভাগের বড় কর্ত্তা যিনি Director of Agriculture তিনি সাত সমুদ্র তের নদীর পারের অর্থাৎ বিলাত হইতে হয় হাজার মাইল দূরের একজন সাহেব। আমি একথাও বোজতে পারি যে তাঁহাদের দেশে ধান পাটের কোন চিহ্নও নাই। আমাদের দেশের কৃষকেরা যা কিছু উৎপন্ন করে তাতেই একটা ভাগ বসিয়ে যাঁরা ধান ডিরেক্টার সাহেব

বাহাদুরের তাঁদেরই মধ্যকার একজন লোক। এই যে একটা তামাসা হচ্ছে এই Department নিয়ে এটা আমি মোটেই পছন্দ করিনা—এখন ইহার আমূল সংস্কার সাধন একান্ত আবশ্যক হ'য়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। কারন কৃষককে রক্ষা না কোরলে দেশ রক্ষা পাবে না। কৃষক দেশের মেরুদণ্ড কৃষক কামধেনু তুল্য যাকে সকালে বিকালে রাত্রে দ্বিপ্রহরে সব সময় সবাই কেবল দোহন করে কিন্তু তাকে রক্ষা করবার জন্য উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থা কেহই করেন না চতুঃর্দ্দিক হ'তে "কে কে কৃষককে দোহন করে বলুন"? ইহাদিগকে জমিদার মহাজন (কেন উকিল মোক্তার ডাক্তার?) আমি এখানে উকিল মোক্তার ও ডাক্তারদের কথা বলিয়া অযথা বগড়া তুলিতে চাইনা। আমি নবাব বাহাদুরের বক্তৃতা পড়ে দেখেছি তিনি নিজের বক্তৃতায় নিজেই যেন আনন্দ প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন, আমি কিন্তু তাঁহার বক্তৃতা প'ড়ে মোটেই সন্তুষ্ট হই নাই। তিনি বলেছেন আমি কৃষকদিগকে উন্নত করার জন্য এবার অনেকগুলি নূতন পদ্ধতির সৃষ্টি কোরেছি। কিন্তু আমি খুব মনোযোগ সহকারে তাঁহার বক্তৃতা পড়ে দেখেছি তাঁহার বক্তৃতায় কৃষকের উন্নতির আসল ও গোড়ার কথা কিছুই নাই। কিম্বা এমন কোন পথ তিনি নির্দ্দেশ করেন নাই যাহাতে কৃষকগণ সত্য সত্যই কোন উপকার পায়। নবাব বাহাদুর যেন সব সময়েই মনে রাখেন কৃষককে বাঁচাতে হ'লে প্রথমেই তাহাদের মাথা থে'কে ঋণ ভার কমাতে হ'বে। যে ঋণ কৃষক খে'য়ে নয়, প'রে নয়, কোন অপব্যয় ক'রে নয়, কতকগুলি চালাক লোক আর কতকগুলি মহাজন Banker এবং জমিদার এরা সবাই মিলে মিশে ষড়যন্ত্র করে অত্যন্ত অন্যায় ভাবে ওদের উপর ঋণের বোঝা চাপিয়ে দিয়াছেন, সেই ঋণের বোঝা প্রথমেই তাদের মাথা হতে নাবিয়ে নিতে হবে। তা না হলে গভর্ণমেণ্টের এই অর্থব্যয়ের কোন সার্থকতা হইবে না।

At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR:** I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 15,36,000 under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100.

এসম্বন্ধে অধিক বক্তৃতা দেওয়া নিষ্প্রয়োজন। কারণ ভারপ্রাপ্ত মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় তাঁর যে লিখিত Statement দিয়েছেন তাতেই স্বীকার কোরেছেন যে, " There has been for some time a persistent demand that the Government should introduce measure to fix a minimum price for jute. কাজেই এসম্বন্ধে যাঁরা কৃষক জনসাধারণের দাবী নিয়ে এই Assembly তে এসেছেন তাঁরাত আমার সঙ্গে একমত হবেনই, বিশেষ কোরে আমাদের ভারপ্রাপ্ত মন্ত্রী মহোদয় আমাদের জনমতের দাবীটা যে উপলব্ধি কোরতে পেরেছেন সেটাও তাঁর Statement এর মধ্যেই রয়েছে। কিন্তু তিনি Statement এ তার পরক্ষণেই সুর বদলাইয়া এ সম্বন্ধে বোলেছেন যে, " I do not say that compulsory restriction or fixing of minimum prices will inevitably result from this Survey but I do say that no one can now say without the date such a Survey will provide whether compulsory restriction or fixing of minimum prices is or is not practicable under existing condition." অর্থাৎ তিনি এই সকল স্বীকার কোরেও তারপর বোলেছেন যে, এই যে ১।০ লক্ষ টাকা খরচ কোরে যে প্রপাগেণ্ডা এবং Jute census ইত্যাদি হবে তার শেষ ফল যে কি হবে সে সম্বন্ধে নির্দ্দিষ্ট কোন schem$_e$ করেন নাই। এই অনির্দ্দিষ্ট ফলের জন্য তিনি এত টাকা আমাদের কাছে চেয়েছেন কাজেই এই টাকাটা সম্বন্ধে গভর্ণমেণ্টের কোন দায়িত্ব আছে বোলে মনে হয় না। ইহাদ্বারা পাটের সর্ব্বনিম্ন মূল্য নির্দ্দিষ্ট ব্যাপারে জনমতকে ধামাচাপা দিয়া পাট চাষীগণকে প্রতারিত করা ছাড়া অন্য কোন উদ্দেশ্য আছে বলিয়া আমি বিশ্বাস করি না। এই বিষয়টি সহজ ও সরল, কাজেই আমার আর বিশেষ কিছু বলবার নাই।

**Mr. W. A. M. WALKER:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the question of the cut motion on the failure of the Government to fix a minimum price for jute. Sir, this is a hardy annual but the question has loomed more in the public eye recently on account of private members bills which have been circulated for opinion.

I have studied the views of most of the leading commercial bodies and can find no support whatever for the particular proposal of fixing a minimum price for jute—in fact there seems to be a wholesale condemnation of the idea in all commercial circles.

There are many aspects from which one might criticise this minimum price question such as the point of view of other provinces. Jute is not a monopoly of Bengal and the co-operation of other jute-growing provinces would be essential. From the stony silence with which they appear to have received the Hon'ble Minister's overtures in connection with jute restriction it seems even more likely that they would have nothing whatever to do with a scheme for fixing prices when by refraining from doing so they might reap considerable benefit by way of the Jute Export Tax.

But it is not from this point of view particularly that I wish to examine the question, and as the time at my disposal is short, I shall confine the rest of my remarks to the proposition as it appears to the industry which I represent in this Assembly, the Indian Jute Mills Association.

There is a large section of the supporters of this proposal who in their zeal for the welfare of the cultivators appear entirely to overlook the fact that this is closely bound up with the welfare of the Jute Mill Industry. The position of jute in Bengal does not end with the cultivation and marketing of the fibre, over 60 per cent. of the jute crop is manufactured in and around Calcutta and the expansion and contraction of this large industry depends to a very great extent upon the cheapness of the raw material and the consequent attractiveness of cheap wrapping materials to consuming centres. The industry has already had bitter experiences of restricted demand consequent upon high prices and the substitution of other materials than jute for packing purposes. Within the past 2 or 3 years, however, there has been an expansion of demand, particularly from America and this has been due solely to the cheap prices ruling. I would warn hon'ble members that attempts to raise the price of the raw material to anywhere near the levels suggested by some of the movers of these cut motions will result in an immediate falling off of demand from consumers.

This will not only result in large stocks of the raw materials accumulating presumably on the hands of Government but will be a very considerable loss in revenue to the province through the drop in income from the Export Tax on manufactured goods.

Governments of consuming centres and in particular of America have the interests of their own growers of raw materials for packing to consider and it is principally the undoubted advantage of the cheap jute wrapper which has prevented legislation in favour of other materials. Once prices are raised to the levels which would be resultant upon some of the suggestions of hon'ble member the question of substitutes will immediately come into active being and the whole province will be a heavy loser. There are of course other aspects of the question such as the possibility of the Government being required to carry and finance enormous stocks amounting to many crores of rupees and the cessation of advances such as are made by balers to *beparis* and *fariahs*. These and many other grave problems would arise but the main point to be stressed is that the fixing of a minimum price for jute at anywhere near the suggested figure would undoubtedly restrict the outlet for jute and open the way to competition from substitutes. As my hon'ble friend and namesake sitting on the benches below me has written in a note on this question—"The scheme would have a brief and doubtless merry existence for a season but would be followed by disastrous results."

Sir, I commend this warning to the House and would appeal to all those who have the interests of the province at heart to reflect gravely upon the consequences of the adoption of a policy such as is suggested by the movers of these cut motions.

(At this stage Mr. Speaker left the Chair and Mr. Deputy Speaker took the Chair.)

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi FAZLUL QADIR:** Sir, I will only speak a few words on a most important subject now, for a hundred years cotton cultivation in Bengal was neglected. Bengal was once famous for producing the finest cotton in the world, up to the year 1789 as will appear from the Report of Mr. Evans, the then Director of Agriculture, Bengal, I am just reading a few lines from his reports for the information of the hon'ble members: "The decline of industry appears to have set in about the year 1789; thus in that year the exports from Dacca alone amounted to Rs. 12 lakhs a year. In the year 1813 they did not exceed Rs. 3½ lakhs and in 1817 they ceased altogether." In the days when the industry was in its prime, however, there seems to be no doubt whatever that all the cotton required was grown locally. Thus Luillier writing in 1726 speaks of large quantities of cotton being grown in Bengal and that the plants grew to a height of three feet. Mr. Hebb, Commercial Resident of Dacca, in a report to the East India Company, dated 1788, speaks of the staple as "the finest cotton in the world and producing cotton of astonishing beauty and fineness."

"A few plants may, however, still be discovered in out-of-the-way parts of the Madhupur jungle. If seed can be obtained, however, it is

probable that it will prove most valuable as a basis for future selection and improvement."

"The Province of Bengal as at present constituted grows less cotton in proportion to its size than any other province in India."

"The early cotton is grown entirely in the Chittagong Hill Tracts by aboriginal tribes employing very primitive methods of cultivation. It consists of a very short stapled harsh cotton used for mixing with wool or for packing mattresses, etc. In the trade it is classified as "Comilla."

"The late cotton is grown in scattered areas over the higher lying portions of Bankura and Midnapore in Western Bengal."

I have submitted a scheme to the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture on 17th April 1937 regarding the cotton cultivation. The Hon'ble Minister was pleased to forward my report to the Director of Agriculture, who submitted my report to the Cotton Mill Owners' Association who has adopted my scheme and has promised that they are willing to contribute Rs. 10,000 for this purpose and long stapled cotton will be grown with that help. I have personal experience of long stapled cotton and I am very much convinced that this sort of cotton, namely, "Dharwar-American" cotton, can be grown in any high land of Bengal. The Hon'ble Minister has also asked the Director of Agriculture to make experiments in six districts of Bengal for this sort of cotton and from the reports of Mr. S. C. Mitter, the Director of Industries, it appears that Rs. 15 crores worth of cotton goods are imported into Bengal annually, and if we can introduce this cotton cultivation, it will bring additional income to the poor agriculturist and they will be able to have some of their clothes made from their own cotton spun and given in exchange to weavers, and it will bring them additional income. The resources of the country will increase if we introduce this cotton cultivation. With the long staple cotton cultivation if reintroduced and successful, the wealth of Bengal will increase by 5 to 10 crores a year. I congratulate the Hon'ble Minister for adopting my scheme and thus trying to solve one of the problems of this province. His slogan should be "mota bhat, mota kapar", just as the Chief Minister's slogan is "dal bhat" and thus we shall be able to solve the poverty problem of Bengal. It is gratifying to see that the Mill Owners' Association has guaranteed the market and has fixed the lowest price at Rs. 25 per maund. Another matter on which I should like to congratulate the Hon'ble Minister is upon introduction of Coimbatore sugarcane. The Agriculture Department has done valuable work in many districts by introducing this sugarcane and this has increased the income of the agriculturists. I have seen with my own eyes that the finest class of *gur* is manufactured from this Coimbatore sugarcane. If the Director of Agriculture continues to give his attention to this

direction it will, as I have said, result in increased revenue to the province and increase the income of the agriculturists.

**Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL:** Sir, the Department of Agriculture appears to many as a misnomer because the poor agriculturists for whom this department is meant generally get no benefit out of it; nay, there are many who are not even aware of the existence of this department. Until now nothing has been done for improving the fertility of soil, though there has been an attempt on the part of the Government for voluntary restriction of jute for the last three or four years. There has been no attempt to find out suitable substitute money crops for the lands released from jute-cultivation leading to a great pecuniary loss of the cultivators because the lands released did not yield them any corresponding return. In my own constituency, Kishoreganj, sugarcane was suggested to be the substitute for jute but this led to an abnormal fall in the price of sugarcane, so much so that *gur* or sugar produced therefrom was sold at 2-8 to 3 rupees per maund, and the Government took no notice of this sudden fall in price of sugarcane and hence the cultivators were forced to increase cultivation of jute in spite of intensive propaganda. Moreover everybody in the country is not so much anxious whether a minimum price is fixed or not but what they are anxious is to have a fair price for jute, be it by legislation or otherwise. Last year Government replied that without compulsory restriction fixation of minimum price was not possible, that restriction should be imposed simultaneously in all jute growing provinces, namely, Bengal, Bihar and Assam and that it requires time. We want to know how far the Government have proceeded in that matter. The Government suggested that they would write to the Central Jute Enquiry Committee—may I know, what has been done by the Jute Enquiry Committee? The Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur told us that he was a layman but by now his experience have probably made him wiser. Jute Enquiry Committee observed 'We recognise the full force of these difficulties, but we are of opinion that if it be not possible to enact and enforce an all-India legislation immediately, action should be taken by the local Government and monetary consideration should not be allowed to postpone the adoption of a common standard of quality of jute'. The Committee further observed 'In view of the economic importance of the fibre, we strongly recommend that the standard weight should be introduced as early as possible by law, at first in jute trade only'. At a meeting of various jute interests, namely, importers, balers and brokers, held in Calcutta on the 25th January 1929 presided over by Mr . D. P. Khaitan it was resolved that the Government of Bengal should introduce legislation at the earliest possibly opportunity to fix a definite standard of quality for all dealings in jute as has been done by the Government of the United States of America by passing the Cotton Standards Act. The Bengal Banking Enquiry Committee also

was of opinion that owing to the loss suffered by the cultivator, the standard should be made definite by some special legislation on the lines of the American Cotton Standards Act. The Central Banking Enquiry Committee also observed that in view of the great importance to the producer, the standard should be fixed as early as possible. We further recommend that the local Government should take steps to legislate for fixing the standard as well as the grading of jute. As for improvement in the price of jute, there are difficulties but there are two things which stand in the way of——

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, order. The House should now adjourn for prayer.

(The House was then adjourned for fifteen minutes.)

*After adjournment.*

(Mr. Speaker was in the Chair when the House reassembled.)

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, in supporting the motion moved by my friend Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal and also the motion No. 252 moved by Maulvi Maqbul Hosain, I submit firstly that though the question of improvement of the economic condition of the agriculturists of Bengal is difficult, yet it is not such as to be beyond control. What are the main causes of the economic depression and the present abject condition of the agriculturists? Any student of Economics will at once say in reply that the main causes of the economic depression in Bengal are—the average uneconomic holding, the fall in the fertility of the land and also the fall in the prices of land-produce. The holding has been so miserably uneconomic to-day that an average agriculturist family do not possess more than 6·7 bighas of land. When the average is 6·7 bighas, we can easily realise that more than 50 per cent. of the agriculturists have got less than 6·7 bighas. But taking the average as it is, what do we find? We find that the average agriculturist cannot produce sufficient crops to maintain himself and his family members even for six months. It is found on calculation that at least 12 bighas of land is required for an average agriculturist family to depend on agriculture for their maintenance. It is therefore not difficult to understand that an agriculturist having only 6·7 bighas of land can hardly maintain the family with the land-produce. When that is the condition of the agriculturists, who form 80 per cent. of the population of this province, I do not know, how without making the holding economic you can remove the economic depression in the province and save the agriculturists. Even if it is declared from the top of this Assembly House that from to-morrow the agriculturist will not have to repay his debt nor pay any rent, you cannot save the agriculturist from starvation and ruin, unless you can devise means to

restore the economic standard of holdings. Government have failed to tackle this problem. I shall, however, make one suggestion. There are about 2 crores of bighas of culturable waste lands in the province of Bengal, which come to about 6 million acres. From this side of the House we tabled a resolution asking the Government to pay subsidies to *bona fide* agriculturists so that those 2 crores of bighas of land could be developed and distributed among the agriculturists having uneconomic holdings. If this could be done, it would be doing a lot for saving the agriculturists. Then, Sir, about the loss of fertility of the land, the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture may not be surprised to hear that the productivity of our land has fallen from seven maunds of paddy per bigha in 1901 to about four maunds of paddy in 1933, when the average production is so low and the holding is also uneconomic, I do not know what more horrible picture we can imagine of agriculture and the agriculturists. Government have not tackled this problem either.

Then, Sir, the third factor is the fall in the prices of land products, and of these land products I should deal with only one product, namely, jute. Right or wrong, the jute has been the chief money crop of Bengal and upon the fair price of jute rests the prosperity of this province. You are aware, Sir, that the question of raising the price of jute demands immediate attention and as a member of the Jute Enquiry Committee you also observed by looking to all phases of this question that somehow or other this price must be raised. Government cannot deny that the fall in price of jute has affected every section of the population. It has affected not only the agriculturists, but also the traders, the industrialists, the professionals and everybody. So, Sir, it is high time that the price of jute should be raised. But Government have not seriously taken up this question also.

Sir, I think there has been some misunderstanding among some members of this House about the demand of the representatives of the people for fixing the minimum price of jute by legislation. Sir, in order to clear up that misunderstanding, I should submit first of all that we do not want a fixed price for all time to come nor do we want a price even equal to the price of the substitute, against which my hon'ble friend, Mr. Walker, has given us a warning. We know that in the interests of jute industry we should not want any price of jute which is even equal to the price of the substitute, not to speak of any higher price. What we want is that the jute-growers must get a fair price which shall be fixed every year below the price of the substitute. The growers must dictate the price, and they must not sell their jute at the price dictated by the mill-owners. That is our view-point. How we can do that, I shall now explain. What I mean to say is that we shall from year to year——

(Here the member reached his time-limit.)

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Can I have one minute more, Sir?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No, I am sorry.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** I will speak only one sentence more, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Only one sentence! All right.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** What I mean to say is that we shall from year to year fix a price for the jute which will result in reducing the profit of the mill-owners and not in increasing the competitive price of manufactured jute.

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** No profit now.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** I am bold to say, Sir, that during the pre-war time the jute mill-owners were contented with a profit of Re. 1 per maund of manufactured jute. But in the post-war period, they earned a profit of about Rs. 4 per maund of manufactured jute, and during the depression period when the agriculturists were starving, these will-owners were earning a profit of Rs. 3-8 per maund. All that we want——

**Mr. DEBI PROSAD KHAITAN:** I rise on a point of order, Sir. I fear Mr. Biswas has forgotten arithmetic. He took permission from you for one sentence, but I think he has finished at least ten by now. (Laughter.)

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** All that we want is to reduce the profit of the mill-owners out of the manufactured jute. We simply want a portion of the profit of the mill-owners to the benefit of the agriculturists, I mean the jute-growers.

**Mr. DAVID HENDRY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, under the new arrangements I believe I am allowed five minutes only to speak, so I must be brief. I should like to have had longer, for there is much I could say on this subject. Eight years of the best part of my life were spent in the Indian Agricultural Service, and my heart is still with the cultivators in the fields. It therefore gladdens my heart to recognise the sincerity of purpose which lies behind the proposals of the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture for the betterment of agriculture in this Province. In the statement which he circulated yesterday evening there is evidence of a genuine desire to tackle the work of agricultural improvement which has been too long delayed and in this work he can rely upon our co-operation and assistance.

No schemes of improvement, however, are of any value unless the means are available to carry them out; and in this case where all the improvement proposals depend upon field demonstration by trained staff, the provision of trained men is of primary and vital importance. These we know are not available, for Bengal has always lagged behind other Provinces in providing facilities for higher agricultural training. I see that provision has been made for an Agricultural Institute at Dacca and a Secondary Agricultural School at Chinsura. These may be estimable enough in their own way, but they are not good enough, and they do not provide a satisfactory basis on which to build schemes of agricultural improvement. I have had some experience of training and handling expert agricultural staff, and I have no hesitation in saying that the partially trained agricultural school man is not good enough. In this case, half a loaf is not better than no bread, and, in the absence of fuller details of the proposed Agricultural Institute at Dacca, one must look upon it as half a loaf. What is really required is a well-equipped agricultural college of University status, and I hope that the Hon'ble Minister will be able to assure us that it is his intention to establish such a college at the earliest possible moment. I have no time to develop this theme here, but I would refer him to a note of mine on this subject which appeared in "The Statesman" on 8th December last and of which I can let him have a copy. It may be argued that to wait until competent graduates are trained and available means further delay in getting on with the work of improvement, but this is not so; and to start in the wrong way is to put back the clock indefinitely.

While these men are being trained, much can be done in a small way and I am glad to see that provision has been made for the revival of the Union Board farms, for these can be made to fulfil a very useful purpose and serve as centres for the extension of field demonstrations in their neighbourhood. I am not clear, however, on the purpose for which Rs. 6,500 has been provided as award of prizes. To my mind, this seems to be a doubtful form of expenditure in an understaffed department; and I would prefer to see the money devoted to other purposes such as, more field demonstration or establishment of more seed stores.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir. I am grateful to the Hon'ble Minister for having circulated among the Members the ambitions of his department and the lines along which he proposes to put them into practice. I think I shall be right when I say that in this department a genuine effort has been made to tackle, with resolution and determination, the improvement of agriculture so far as money and men are available. It is difficult to dissociate Bengal from jute, for, this Province has held the monopoly in this commodity for long years. It will, however, be unwise to build our hopes for the future

on this idea of a monopoly which is no more than a legacy of the days when Bengal was one with Bihar, and Orissa. Schemes whether they be for a restriction of the area under cultivation or for the fixing of a price satisfactory to the cultivator, will have to be taken in hand in consultation and co-operation with our jute growing neighbours, for, the acreage under jute cultivation in some of these provinces is on the increase. In Orissa it has gone up by 14 per cent. and in Assam by 26 per cent., while in Bengal the diminution is about 22 per cent. It should not be difficult for the Governments of these provinces to apportion the acreage between themselves in an equitable manner, through mutual discussion and understanding. If necessary, the assistance of the Central Government might also be invoked as was done in the inter-provincial settlement regarding the sugar industry. In whatever we do, it is of paramount importance that the cultivator should get a fair and economic price for his produce and in order that that price remain stable and maintain itself at that level, the cultivation of jute has to be balanced with the world demand of the commodity, which ranges to-day between 9 and 10 million bales. The Government should in no way discontinue their voluntary efforts, as heretofore, towards restriction. On the contrary, they should be pursued on a wider scale and in a more efficient manner. To do this more money will be required. I expect that it will be forthcoming in the shape of a supplementary grant. Investigation as regards suitable and equally or better paying alternative money crops will have to be made. Simultaneously, alternative and substitute uses for jute must be studied and investigated. I am told, jute can be, and actually is being, used in place of pulp in the manufacture of paper. I make this as one suggestion but the industrial and commercial possibilities of this or other uses will have to be explored fully before we embark on any new and revolutionary changes.

The commercial community has noted with satisfaction the decision of the Government to prepare correct statistics and supply reliable forecasts of jute acreage and crop. These are essential to adjust the supply to the demand of the world. It will also be useful to have detailed maps, of the area where the fibre is or can be cultivated, prepared, as such a survey, with maps and full statistics, will help the Government in coming to a decision on the policy of compulsory restriction and, ultimately, in enforcing it. In this connection may I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the notorious practice of watering the jute by the Aratdar before it is sent to Calcutta. Watering increases the weight, sometimes by so much as 25 per cent, but it also causes, what is known as "Heart Damage." Above all it falsifies all calculations and puts a wrong complexion on the final forecast published by the Department. If there can be laws against the adulteration of foodstuffs and against false weights and measures, I can assure the Government that this House, which gave its consent to the abolition of Phooka, not so long ago, will not hesitate to strengthen the arm of the Law, against

this form of Phooka—literally inflation—in the weight and the price of jute, for watering also upsets the price level in the mufassil. The Aratdar purchases the jute, say, at Rs. 6 per maund. After watering it, he sells it in Calcutta, at Rs. 5-12-0 and yet actually makes a profit on the bargain. But he goes back to the cultivator and, relating a tale of woe, induces that innocent man to part with his goods at a price even lower than before or what he should really get.

The question of fixing a minimum price is interlocked with the problem of the compulsory restriction of the crop. These in turn will depend, as I have said, on an equitable and reasonable agreement among the jute growing provinces. The Muslim Chamber of Commerce is anxious to see that the cultivator, on whose labour depends the whole structure of the industry, should receive a fair and decent return on his labour. In trying to help him, we should bear in mind, that the raising of the price and calling it a minimum to a level such as will bring into the market substitutes that would compete effectively on an economic basis with the fibre and curtail its demand, should not defeat our primary object. This is as much true of raw material as of finished goods. The manufacturer should not grudge the cultivator a reasonable price while he, on his part, should so rationalise his methods of manufacture and sale that the danger of substitutes does not materialise and is altogether eliminated.

I am glad to note that the agreement between the Association and the non-Association Mills, in regard to hours of work and output, is about to be arrived at, after years of negotiation. In case legislative sanction is sought to implement it, the House will see that no section of the community, be it commercial, industrial or agricultural, gets any undue advantage over the other; that the vested interests from any quarter do not entrench themselves deeper; and that nothing will be allowed which is likely to impede the industrial development and expansion of the Province. In the absence of an agreement the mills will, naturally, try to hold back their purchases in order to force the cultivator to sell his produce at the lowest possible price. If the price goes down by a rupee or, say, by a rupee and a half on this season's price, it will mean a loss of anything from 7 to 10 crores to the cultivators. Decisions, therefore, have to be taken almost immediately and the interests of the cultivator as well as those of the manufacturer safeguarded. The fixing of a minimum price and compulsory restriction of the acreage under cultivation will not end our troubles. Neither the mills, which have earned their initial outlay several hundred times over and possess large reserves at their command and can impede effectively, if they so desire, any schemes for the amelioration of the cultivator on whose sweat of brow the industry has prospered, nor any ill-conceived or lofty advocacy of the rights of the peasants, should be permitted to prejudice the even progress of the industry, for, between the interests of the manufacturers and the cultivators, the interests of

the workers of the mills cannot be allowed to be jeopardised. The problem is a complicated one and it will tax to its utmost, the capacity of all, in arriving at a satisfactory solution. In trying to reach a settlement, I hope the Government will also study the question of export and excise duties and the taxing of "phatka" transactions, with a view so to adjust these as to create an equilibrium of an enduring character on the lines I have tried to indicate and balance the three interests I have mentioned.

I am not unmindful of the logical conclusion of a policy of the fixation of prices. We have before us the example of the experiments made in North America, in Cotton and in South America, in Linseed. Under these, after fixing a minimum price, if the market falls below the fixed level, the Governments advance money on an agreed basis to the seller and take possession of his goods. These are kept in safe custody until the market rises up to the fixed level, when they are sold. Once a decision is taken by us there should be no hesitation in implementing it, boldly and courageously, in all its ramifications, even if it lead to the locking up, temporarily, of large amounts, in what should be considered as an industrial *taqavi*. We should benefit out of the experience of others and do our best to keep the life giving sap of jute flowing steadily in the economic growth of Bengal's prosperity.

The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Mr. Speaker. Just as Sir, we have got the Tuberculosis Day, the Independence Day and the other numberless days, so to-day, Sir, we have Peasants Day, the Cultivators Day, the day of the children of the soil. To-day by the flow of the speeches of the different members, by the flow of the tears of the members of this House we find perhaps the millennium will come to the tenants. Sir, I envy the lot of the poor peasants of the soil because we find that beginning from the Zemindar living in the palace right up to the poor man in the streets we find that everyone has been saying that much has been or is being done to ameliorate the condition of the poor peasantry of this land of Bengal but the irony of fate is that they remain in the same condition as they were before. Furthermore we find that those of us who are Zemindars are torturing the peasants right in and right out, the Mahajans are exacting the pound of flesh from the poor tenants. Those of us who go in the name of the poor for doing good to them and speaking in a manner, acting in a manner which is to serve their own ends they all vie one another in the so-called ameliorating the condition of these poor people but I find that we have not gone a step further in improving the condition of these masses. Certainly, by making speeches, by placing cut motions and trying to fix the minimum price of jute, the condition of the poor tenant will not be improved in any way whatsoever. So far as question of fixation of the price of jute is concerned I can say with hand

on my heart and conscience that it is impossible to fix the price of jute without causing any injury and harm to the tenants at large. Of course it is a very complicated question and it cannot be solved in a minute nor can it be solved by a mere legislation as has been enunciated by some of my friends here. So far as the question of the fixation of the price of jute is concerned, there is none here or may be there are some persons who are against it—and there are others many of whom do want that the price of jute must be fixed so that the tenants may get better prices for that. (A VOICE FROM THE CONGRESS SIDE: What about Europeans? Are they not friends?)

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** I did not say that they are not my friends. I can say that the Europeans, so long as they live in this land, they are certainly interested in improving the condition of the poor of this land of Bengal. Therefore it is not for me to speak against them. Whenever it is possible to speak in their favour, we shall do so and whenever we are to speak in their disfavour we do so. The question of the fixation of the price of jute is a thing which has got to be adjusted having regard to produce and consumption and import and export of the world markets, tariff, and things like that. Therefore, if we just try to fix the price of jute without going into such matters it will bring complete ruination to the agriculturists. As it is, it is a complicated problem. I will just read a few lines regarding the impossibility of fixing the price of jute. But before I do so, Sir, I will ask my friend Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas in the name of the tenants that when he was talking of legislation for restricting the price of jute if he had considered the case of *bhag chasis* and *adhiars*.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Certainly, I did.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Sir, the majority of tenants living in this province cultivate their lands on the *bhag* system, and the middle class people really enjoy half the produce of the land. Are they prepared to do away with this iniquitous system in order to do justice to the poor cultivators? I will just give one instance, Sir, of a man living in thana Nandigram in the subdivision of Natore, and whose name is Momin Haji. That man has 4,000 bighas of land and gets about 12,000 maunds of paddy a year by letting out his land in *adhi*. That man does not cultivate a single bigha himself but lives on the toils of his tenants. (Cries of "Shame, shame"). Such men, Sir, are not wanting in our country. Therefore, I say, Sir, that simply speaking in the name of the tenants will not do. You will have to proceed in such a manner as to do real justice to the tenants.

Now, Sir, so far as this question of restriction of the price of jute is concerned—

(At this stage the member having reached time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the whole country is convinced, and the Government also is convinced that if the price of jute has to be raised, the cultivation of jute has got to be restricted and as such the Government has for several years past been pursuing a policy of voluntary restriction of the cultivation of jute. The whole country knows, Sir, how far that propaganda has succeeded. I myself am convinced, having been intimately connected with this propaganda for some time, that it has proved to be a complete failure. (Cries of "Hear, hear".) Further expenditure of money on that propaganda will, in my opinion, be altogether fruitless. Therefore, the only question before Government now is to consider seriously whether they should go in for compulsory restriction. Government have been considering this question for a long time, but they have been fighting shy of tackling the problem. Government are not trying to come to real grips with the problem. The problem is no doubt difficult, but I think it is not impossible of solution. The Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur of Dacca in his printed note, which has been circulated, has invited schemes for the restriction of the cultivation of jute and for raising the price of jute. All that is very good. Sir, if he is convinced that the policy of compulsory restriction is sound, it is for Government to frame a scheme. Government have their own machinery. We have not got experts who can be employed for drawing up suitable schemes. Therefore, that excuse will not do. Sir, as I have already stated, there are difficulties in the way, and those difficulties have been referred to in this House to-day even by the European members. So far as the European members are concerned, they represent the manufacturers of jute, and if the price of jute is raised, the cultivators will be gainer; but to that extent the manufacturers will be loosers. (Cries of "Hear, hear".) Therefore, the interests of the growers and of the manufacturers are antagonistic so far as this question is concerned. I can never imagine that the European group will ever agree to a proposal to raise the price of jute by restricting cultivation by legislation. Therefore, their opinion has always to be taken with a grain of salt.

It has been said, Sir, that there is the constant fear of a substitute crops. I admit the fear is there, but the question is whether Government will ever think of fixing such high price as will encourage the production of substitute crops. The price will have to be fixed within reasonable limits, so that the danger of substitutes may be obviated.

Then, Sir, there is another question, viz., that the interest of the industry has got to be looked after. I do not want that the mill industry should be stifled, and I believe that if the Indian mill industry is destroyed that will not be to the interest of the cultivators. But I agree with Mr. Biswas that the profits of the mills can be substantially reduced and that the profits of the middle men may be altogether obliterated, and if that is done, the profits of the cultivators will be substantially raised. (Cries of "Hear, hear".)

Then, Sir, as to what price should be fixed for jute, I have already stated that it will depend on various factors and that various questions will have to be considered. The question that every one is asking is why are not Government coming forward with a declaration that voluntary restriction is of no avail now and that a policy of compulsory restriction should be adopted?

With these few words, Sir, I support the motion now before the House.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I submit that the closure be now put.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur of Dacca.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** Sir, I have listened with great interest to the debate. As the time is very limited, I shall be very brief in my reply. When I heard Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal speaking, I thought that he was going to unfold a very big plan for the amelioration of the condition of the agriculturists of the province, but unfortunately except for the bare statement that the Department of Agriculture has failed in its duties, no plan has been unfolded from which Government could derive any benefit.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Come to me.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Come to us.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** The only plan which he unfolded was: why have not Government started a large number of regulated markets for the purpose of experiments—why have they started only two such markets? I wish to inform him that I have not got the magic lamp of Aladin with which to get enough men for the purpose of starting a large number of regulated markets, and I do not think the House will agree with him. This is the first problem which Government have tackled in Bengal, viz., starting two regulated markets. Sir, we have very little experience, and I do not suppose that the House will advise me to go

in for regulated markets on a large scale, until it is found by actual experience that a large number of regulated markets is really necessary. I submit, Sir, that if Government had launched upon a scheme of starting a large number of regulated markets without experience and if the experiment proved a failure, a large amount of public funds would have been lost for nothing. That is why, Sir, we have been very cautious and have started only two regulated markets, with the human material at my disposal.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is there any dearth of men?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** As soon as we get a sufficient number of trained men and find that the experiment already started is successful, it would be easy for us to multiply the number of such markets.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** We do not agree with you.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** Unless you take over the question of marketing into your hands, how can you say that the experiment will not be successful?

(At this stage several members rose in their seats to ask questions.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I would request hon'ble members not to interrupt the Hon'ble Minister in this way and put cross questions to him in this manner. I can quite understand the fact that there might be a necessity for putting questions now and then, but that is usually done by the leaders of the various parties, so that the position of the respective parties might be intelligible. An occasional interruption may be permissible, but if every member thinks only of interrupting Hon'ble Ministers then the total effect of these interruptions can easily be imagined.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I am coming forward before this House with legislation for regulating the markets and market charges.

Now, Sir, in reply to the question of the Maharaja of Mymensingh, I may say that I agree with him that Government have not done enough for demonstration. Sir, I have stated in my printed statement that on account of not having trained men in the department, enough demonstration has not been done. Still I have done something. I have started 92 union board farms and I hope that ultimately we will be able to have one union board farm in every union. Of course, the hon'ble members will realise that there are 5,000 unions in Bengal and if we calculate at the rate of one demonstrator for four union boards, Government will require 1,250 demonstrators. At the present time,

in Bengal we have not got sufficiently educated men for this purpose Up to this time, nothing has been spent in the Agriculture Departmen for providing proper agricultural education for the people of this pro vince. Government have not spent a penny towards imparting agricul tural education to our boys. Even if we get trained men from outsid Bengal for our Agriculture Department, they will not be able to hel much in meeting the needs of the agricultural people, because of thei ignorance of the climatic conditions of Bengal. I have, therefore, pro posed to start an agricultural institute where we will get the best typ of trained men who will be able to train the agriculturists to improv their production.

With regard to standardisation of weights, I may point out tha this does not come under my department. I have, however, asked m colleague in charge of the Local Self-Government Department to mov the Government of India in the matter and I hope a very early an satisfactory result will be arrived at.

Coming to the question of granting agricultural loans, I may assur the hon'ble members that my department has full sympathy with th proposal made. The Government are considering schemes for rura credit and when the question comes under the Co-operative and Rura Credit Department budget the Hon'ble Minister will give the Govern ment point of view in this matter.

With regard to the question of the minimum price of jute Maulv Tamizuddin Khan has said that it is the duty of Government to com up with proposals regarding this. Government have had several com mittees on the subject and every committee has definitely said that i is impracticable. The material at the disposal of the Government i against the fixing of the minimum price of jute. If the Governmen were to accept the proposal to fix the minimum price of jute at Rs. 1( per maund, they will have to be prepared to buy all the jute which wil not be bought by the mills and other countries. Last year the figure were 107 lakhs pucca bales, each bale consisting of 5 maunds of jute That means 535 lakhs of maunds of jute at Rs. 10 per maund, i.e., 5 crores of rupees. If for two years nobody comes forward to buy jute it will mean an expenditure to the Government of Rs. 106 crores leaving aside the warehousing charges, transport, baling, etc. If, fo argument's sake, we take that minimum price is feasible, then n minimum price can be fixed without a survey and jute census and com pulsory restriction. To have compulsory restriction it is essential tha the jute grown in other provinces should, in the same manner, b restricted as in Bengal. I do not think the House desire that at th expense of the Bengal jute cultivators the jute cultivators of othe provinces should benefit. So you must get the other provinces t agree. I have been trying my utmost, with this object in view, to fi up a conference with the jute-growing provinces. Several letters hav been written, but no reply has been received except a very vague repl

from Assam. Even accepting that all these obstacles can be surmounted, then comes the question of allocation as to what each cultivator should be awarded according to his holding. Then comes the question of appointing a very large staff for the purpose of policing so as to see that the amount awarded shall be honoured: legislation has to be made for awarding fines, punishments to those who will not carry out the orders of those who are controlling the area. Then comes the standardisation of weights and grading.

As I have already stated before, I am prepared to consider any scheme which may be given to me if it is feasible and workable, but unfortunately up to now no scheme has been put forward. Government do not deny that attempt should be made to raise the price of jute. For that purpose I am going to appoint a Jute Committee of both the Houses to go into the question of jute and how to increase its price for the benefit of the tenants. In the same way I am appointing a Paddy Committee for the same purpose. I may say that this was one of the suggestions of my friend Mr. Shamsuddin: so I think he should have no hesitation in accepting my proposal.

Now, Sir, a great deal has been said about jute restriction. I may inform the House that out of half a lakh budgeted for this purpose, Rs. 15,000 goes towards free distribution of seeds and the balance is meant for propaganda to advise the cultivators so that they may be able to grow alternative crops instead of more jute than is necessary, in order to get proper price. Till the time that some scheme can be evolved for compulsory restriction, it is essential that voluntary restriction of jute should continue.

I can assure the House that all the suggestions that have been made I shall try my best to carry out. I may say that I have been in charge of this department for about 11 months of which four months were under Governor's budget and the other four were spent in preparing schemes. My greatest difficulty has been that I have not had any trained men and it is difficult to find trained men for the purpose of working this department. If my scheme is carried out, I can assure you that the department will be working for the benefit of the cultivators and the poor masses—for the purpose for which it is meant. But if it is not able to do so, it would be better to throw the department into the Ganges and not waste a single penny on it. With these words I oppose the cut motions.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Before I put this motion to vote I wish to inform the House that in order to avoid crossing of the floor which sometimes creates difficulty when a division is called I request one side to go first and then the other side, so that there may not be any crossing of each other.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** May I enquire which side will first go to the lobby?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Naturally the Ayes.

The motion of Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal was then put and lost.

**Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** Sir, I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, then, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The motion of Maulvi Jonab Ali Majumdar was then put and a division called.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DATTA MAJUMDAR:** Will you kindly consider what you suggested just a little while ago. Many of the Ayes will take some time to make up their mind. Therefore it will be rather difficult——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will keep it open for a sufficient time.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DATTA MAZUMDAR:** You are not insisting on either side going first.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am not closing the division. After a substantial number of one side go to the lobby, it does not matter if the other side begin to move because they will be able to move freely.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DATTA MAZUMDAR:** The Ministers might like to go into the lobby first, or will you compel them to remain in their seats until the Ayes have already gone to the lobby. The presence of the Ministers, and as a result of your ruling also, might deter others and Ministers may also be deterred from going into the lobby. It will restrict the movement of members.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It will be open to me to ask the Ministers to keep to their seats and not to move about at all.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Quite right.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** If the other party have got to remain in the House they must keep to their seats, and the Ministers should also take their own places; otherwise there is bound to be some difficulty.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You are perfectly right.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Unless the members go to their respective seats I think the usual procedure ought to be followed. If the Ministers and others are not in their own seats (pointing to Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy)——

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** I am sitting with my own group.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think I might make it absolutely clear that for the sake of convenience I am asking one side to go to the lobby first, but it will be open to even those who remain to go to the Ayes and Noes lobby just as they like. It is only for the sake of convenience that I am asking this, but it must be definitely understood that those who remain behind will kindly keep to their seats and will not move till I ask them to go to other side.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** The point I have raised for your consideration is this. If the Ministers and others keep to their usual seats and do not move from their seats, then this procedure may be followed; otherwise the usual procedure has to be followed, because if the Ministers are free to move and if they do not remain in their seats, there will be confusion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I would only like that there should be no movement from any seat either from the left or from the right, and that the members will proceed straight to the lobby. I think there should be no departure from this; otherwise there will be confusion in this House. It is in the interest of the House that I am doing that for the time being. I will discuss this matter with the leaders of the different groups to-morrow. To-day I am doing this on the definite understanding that the members will keep to their seats until they go straight to the lobby and not concentrate in one place or go to different places.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** In my opinion you cannot follow this practice, because I find that a Minister who is sitting there is pulling down a member who wants to go to the Ayes lobby.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You may draw my attention to any irregularities after the division is over.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Sir, this is a matter of privilege. If somebody pulls a man who wants to go to the Ayes lobby from behind, that will never ensure free voting.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am perfectly willing to ensure that the gentlemen who were occupying the seats at the time when the division was called remain in those seats. There should be no canvassing. If there is any canvassing, I will take proper steps in the matter and have their votes expunged. There should be no canvassing in this House.

## AYES.

Abdul Hafeez, Khan Bahadur Syed.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi.
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Aftab Ali, Mr.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Azimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Banerjee, Dr. Suresh Chandra.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerjee, Mr. Sibnath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Banerji, Mr. Satya Priya.
Bannerjee, Mr. Manoranjan.
Barma, Babu Premhari.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Barman, Babu Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhaumik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Bose, Mr. Sarat Chandra.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Mahim Chandra.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das, Mr. Manmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Babu Khagendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Mr. Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Deisi, Mr. Harendra.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Dutta Mazumdar, Mr. Niharendu.
Emdadul Haque, Kazi.
Fazlur Rahman (Muktear), Mr.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Giasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Mr.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hasan Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Syed.
Himatsingka, Mr. Pr. Bhudayal.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jenab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kuwar Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lal.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr.
Maiti, Mr. Nikunja Behari.
Maitra, Mr. Surendra Mohan.
Maji, Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mazumdar, Mr. Birendra Nath.
Mal, Mr. Iswar Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Banka Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Mr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Mukherji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. S.
Mukherji, Dr. H. C.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Pain, Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Kumar Shib Shekhareswar.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Kishori Pati.
Roy, Mr. Monmatha Nath.
Sanaullah, Al-Haj Maulana Dr.
Sanyal Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Babu Nagendra Nath.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr. M.
Sinha, Srijut Maniendra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Yousuf Mirza.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

## NOES.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Bari, Maulvi.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hafiz Mia, Mr.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr.
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Jabbar Patwari, Mr. Md.
Abdul Kader, Mr.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Sahib Maulvi S.
Abdur Rauf, Mr. Shah.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abijur Reza Chowdhury, Khan Bahadur.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hossain, Mr. Ahmed.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Aftab Hossain Joardar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali, Khan Sahib Maulana Enayetpuri.

Ahmed Hossain, Mr.
Akhtaruddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Aminullah, Maulvi.
Amir Ali, Mir. Mia.
Anderson, Mr. J. P.
Armstrong, Mr. W. L.
Ashrafali, Mr. M.
Awlad Hossain Khan, Maulvi
Azaar Ali, Maulvi.
Bannerman, Mr. H. C.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Brasser, Mr. F. C.
Campbell, Sir George.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Crossfield, Mr. L. M.
Das, Mr. Anukul Chandra.
Das, Mr. Kirit Bausan.
Edgar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farsad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Faruqi Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Huq, the Hon'ble Mr. A. K.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr.
Gomes, Mr. S. A.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Habibullah, the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hafizuddin Chowdhury, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hasham Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Hasina Mursned, Mrs.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Hirtzel, Mr. H. A. F.
Heman, Mr. F. T.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur.
Jamiruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Kasiruddin Khan, Khan Sahib.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Khaitan, Mr. Debi Prosad.
Mafizuddin Choudhury, Maulvi.
Maguire, Mr. L. T.
Mahtab, Maharajkumar Uday Chand.
Mahtabuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Miller, Mr. G.
Milne-Robertson, Mr. G. E. L.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Sahib Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Dr. Syed.
Muhammad Sulaiman, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, Mr. Putin Behary.
Mustharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagaswai Haque, Mr. Syed.
Macgregor, Mr. G. G.
Nandy, the Hon'ble Maharaja Srischandra, of Kasimbazar.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nasher Ali, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.S.I.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Patton, Mr. W. C.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Raikut, the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Ray Chaudhury, Mr. Birendra Kishore.
Razaur Rahman, Khan, Mr.
Ross, Mr. J. B.
Roy, Babu Patiram.
Roy, the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh.
Roy, Rai Bahadur Kshirod Chandra.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarker, the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan.
Sassoon, Mr. R. M.
Sen, Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra.
Shahabuddin, Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khandkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.

Ayes being 98 and Noes. 131, the motion was lost.

(Cries of "oh, oh" from the Treasury Bench.)

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Well that shows that the Opposition is growing.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Or rather crawling!

Then the amendment of Mr. Ramizuddin Ahmed that the demand of Rs. 15,36,000 under head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100 was put and lost.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** This disposes of all the amendments that were moved. I will now put the main demand of the Nawab Bahadur.

The main demand that a sum of Rs. 15,36,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" was then put and agreed to.

## 41—Veterinary.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,05,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "41—Veterinary".

**Maulvi JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,05,000 under the head "41—Veterinary" be reduced by Rs. 100 (failure in taking necessary steps for the prevention of the outbreak of cattle epidemic in rural Bengal).

সভাপতি মহোদয়, বাংলার কৃষকগণের গোরু প্রধান মূলধন। অনেক কৃষক আছে, অনেক পল্লীবাসী আছে, যাদের জায়গা জমি নাই, তারা গোরু পালে, গাড়ী পালে, তাদ্বারা যে আয় হয়, তাই দিয়ে পরিবার প্রতিপালন করে। আবার অনেকে আছে—যাদের নিজের জমি নাই, কিন্তু দু'চারটী গোরু রেখে পরের জমি চাষ কোরে জীবন যাপন করে। বিগত কয় বৎসরযাবৎ বিশেষ কোরে ১০।১২ বৎসরযাবৎ বাংলাদেশে গোরুর খোরাক ঘাসের আর পানীয় জলের অভাব হয়ে পড়েছে। পানীয় জলের অভাব এই sense এ বোলছি যে বর্ত্তমানে চৈত্র মাস থেকে আষাঢ় মাসের পূর্ব্ব পর্য্যন্ত বাংলাদেশের পল্লীগ্রামের অনেক জায়গায়ই জল পাওয়া যায় না, যা পাওয়া যায় বহু কষ্টে তাই যোগাড় করে—মানুষ ২।১ গ্লাস কোরে খেয়ে বাঁচে, কিন্তু গোরুর খাবার জন্য কিছুই থাকে না। সেই জন্য প্রায় প্রত্যেক বৎসরই পল্লীতে গো-মড়ক দেখা দেয়। এ সম্বন্ধে আমার বিশেষরূপ জানা আছে। একটা Union Board এর সঙ্গে আমার সম্পর্ক আছে, আমি যে union এ আছি সে union এ প্রত্যেক বৎসর শত শত গোরু গো-মড়কে মারা যায়। গ্রাম অঞ্চলে যে সব হাতুড়ে গো-চিকিৎসক আছে তারা এর কোন চিকিৎসা জানে না। আমি গোরুর চিকিৎসক Assistant Surgeon যে নাকি সদরে থাকে তাকে করবার ডাকিয়েছি, কিন্তু সেই পশুর ডাক্তার সেই Veterinary Surgeon দ্বারা গো-মড়কের কোন প্রতিকার হয় না। তিনি অনেক সময় আমাকে বলেছেন যে, একটা সাবডিভিসনে একজন ডাক্তার, তাঁর সেইজন্য এত বেশী জায়গাথেকে ডাক আসে যে, তার ফলে তাঁকে আজ খবর দিলে তিনি যেতে পারেন ১৫ দিন পরে। ডাক্তারটী আসলে সর্ব্বত্রই ঘোরা ফেরা করে, কিন্তু প্রকৃত পক্ষে তাদ্বারা কোন কাজ হয় না। অবশ্য আমি তাঁকে যখন যেভাবে ডেকেছি তিনি এসেছেন, কিন্তু অনেকেই আমার নিকট বোলেছে যে তিনি তাদের বাড়ী যান নাই। এইরূপে গভর্ণমেণ্টের অবহেলায় গোরু সব নিপাত হয়ে যাচ্ছে। কাজেই এই Department এর জন্য যে টাকা খরচ হয়—সেটা যাদের উদ্দেশ্যে খরচ হয় বোলে প্রকাশ করা হয়, প্রকৃতপক্ষে তারা কোন কর্ত্তব্যই কোরতে পারে না। সম্প্রতি দুই বৎসর আগে ভারত গভর্ণমেণ্ট থেকে stud bull দেওয়া হোয়েছে, গভর্ণমেণ্ট এইজন্য যে টাকা খরচ করেন তার স্থলে যে সকল গোরু পল্লীতে বর্ত্তমান আছে তাদের মড়ক থেকে রক্ষা করবার জন্য যদি টাকা খরচ কোরতেন, তাহলে যে সকল গোরু এখনো আছে তারা রক্ষা পেতে পারতো।

কিন্তু গভর্ণমেণ্ট কোরছেন কি? যে সমস্ত গোরু এদেশে এখনো আছে তাদের রক্ষা না কোরে—অন্য জায়গা থেকে আমদানি কোরে—ভাল গোরু জন্মাবার যে চেষ্টা কোরছেন এটার যে আবশ্যকতা আছে তা আমি বুঝতে পারছি না। যেটা নাকি অত্যাবশ্যক সেটার দিকে লক্ষ্য না কোরে—গো-মড়কের যাতে আবির্ভাব না হয় সে দিকে চেষ্টা না কোরে—যেটার দরকার নেই সেটা করার যে কি তাৎপর্য্য আছে জানি না। এদের এই যে stud bull আমদানি, এর সম্বন্ধে আমি কিছু বোলছি—আমাদের অঞ্চলে কয়টা বুল দেওয়া হ'য়েছিল, তার মধ্যে কয়টা ম'রে গেছে আর কয়টা কঙ্কালসার হ'য়ে শুকিয়ে আছে। এরি জন্য গভর্ণমেণ্ট লক্ষ লক্ষ টাকা খরচ কোরছেন। সমস্ত Department টার এখন এই bull পালনের দিকে দৃষ্টি, আসলে যে কৃষকের বড় গরু বাছুর সব ধ্বংস হ'য়ে যাচ্ছে কৃষকের এই যে একটা বড় মূলধন এটার দিকে গভর্ণমেণ্টের অবহেলা করার কারণ কি—বুঝতে পারছি না। এ Veterinary Department যে আছে, এটার জন্য যে জনসাধারণের টাকা খরচ হয় সেটা অনেকেই জানে না। সুতরাং এ বাবদে যে টাকা খরচ হয় সেটা অনর্থক খরচ হোয়ে থাকে। সেই জন্য cut motion দ্বারা গভর্ণমেণ্টের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ কোরতে চাই। গভর্ণমেণ্ট যেন কৃষকের বড় সম্বল, চাষের একমাত্র উপায় যে গোরু বাছুর, এগুলি যেন মড়কে ধ্বংস না হয় সেদিকে যেন গভর্ণমেণ্ট মনোযোগ দেন। আমি আর বেশী সময় নেবো না। আমি মনে করি প্রত্যেক union এ যদি খোলা সম্ভব নাই হয়, তবে ৩।৪ union এ, বা প্রত্যেক থানায় একটা কোরে গোরুর hospital খোলা দরকার—এই ব'লে আমি বোসছি।

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the cut motion of Mr. Jonab Ali Majumdar. In this country where human beings die like cats and dogs without any treatment, much less need be said about the dumb animals. We shed crocodile tears in this Assembly for the cultivators, and much sympathy is shown to them for their helpless condition. Sir, the cattle is the only capital property of the cultivators. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that agriculture and veterinary are the worst neglected. But it is useless to criticise a Minister. Now, we find that the Government is increasing every year the grants under "General Administration," "Police" and other heads. While people are dying like anything, we are going to build an edifice worth Rs. 15 lakhs for 63 people. While the agriculturist and his only property in the shape of cattle are dying out without treatment, we are going to provide for the free treatment of venereal diseases of the police force. I may draw the attention of the House to the fact that when His Excellency Lord Linlithgow came here as Viceroy and Governor-General, he declared that as every man in this country must have good health, so the quality of the cattle must also improve. Stud bulls are accordingly being distributed in some of the districts of Bengal. I would draw the attention of the House to the fact that stud bulls of mixed breed with milk teeth have been given to union boards, and I know that the gentleman who is in charge of the Veterinary Department is a live-stock expert and not a veterinary expert. I do not know what

other qualifications he has except some domestic qualifications. I would draw the attention of this House to the fact that arrangement has been made for giving directions for supervision, inspection, etc. But the department cannot say what they will supervise and what they will inspect. This year also we find that Rs. 16,000 has been allotted for payment to the Director and Assistant Directors, but whom they will direct there is no mention of that. As my friend has just stated, in the villages the cultivators do not even know that Government has such a department as the Veterinary Department for the treatment of their cattle. The first need of the country is that in every thana there must be a charitable dispensary with a veterinary assistant surgeon in charge of it. But no provision to that effect has been made, and we do not know when it will be made. The Hon'ble Minister promised in his budget speech last year and also this year many things. But in it we find a small paragraph on the Veterinary Department but he admits there that without improvement in the Veterinary Department, agriculture cannot improve. It is really useless to speak of agricultural improvement if this department is not improved.

Now, Sir, I would like to give this suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister on this point. If one Director of the Superior Service as head be appointed for the whole of the province and one Assistant Director of the Lower Provincial Service in each of the five divisions, and one Inspector of Veterinary in each district and one Veterinary Assistant with a charitable dispensary in each thana be appointed, I think the Government can meet some of the demands of the rural population and the cultivators. The Government of Bengal is always top-heavy and it is useless in making this top-heavy Government more heavy, I submit, Sir, with the supervising staff of the Veterinary Department, as there is no work for supervision at all.

(The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi MD. MOZAMMEL HUQ:** The member spoke in Bengali, of which the following is an English translation:—

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to introduce this motion with a view to increasing the number of Muslims in the Veterinary Department. I shall, however, not move it. I shall only enter into a general discussion of this matter. From the answers to the questions put before this Assembly, it has been found that Muslims are very inadequately represented in every department. The other day, in connexion with the Medical Department it was found that out of 165 Assistant Surgeons, only 32 are Muslims. Of the 275 Sub-Assistant Surgeons, only 35 are Muslims. The other day our Finance Minister appointed 34 persons, of whom only 4 are Muslims. Everyone has always thrown dust in the eyes of the Muslims. In spite of our clamours and in spite

of there being our own Ministers we are practically getting nothing according to our demands. Here I tell our own Ministers that we, Muslims, have a good many demands and our request to them is not to throw dust in our eyes any more. We hope they will before long satisfy our demands. I have nothing more to say.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the demand under the head "41—Veterinary" be reduced by Rs. 100. In moving this motion I do not propose to dilate upon the birth, growth and recent development of the Society. All that I will say at once is that it is not an organization at all. It is a clique of Mrs. Stanley, the Secretary of the Society, I mean the Calcutta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I will say, Sir, that we wanted to be members of this Association by signing the membership and application form, and deposited about more or less Rs. 4,000, and about 333 gentlemen applied for membership of the Society including Sir Hari Shanker Paul and Mr. D. P. Khaitan,—not Mr. D. P. Khaitan, member of this Assembly, but Mr. Durga Prosad Khaitan,—among others. Sir, the irony of fate is this. We are entitled to be members of this House, but we are not entitled to be members of that institution which is solely controlled by one Mrs. Stanley who came to control and guide us all the way from England to India. I know she has great influence among the high officials of the Government including High Court Judges. Sir, I have enquired into these things. The influence she is exercising to-day is due to her sex only and nothing else.

Now, to come to the employees of the C.S.P.C.A., I can only say that they are commonly known as "Ghawalas," and their treatment to the carters and particularly the fowl dealers is atrocious. Sir, these employees of the C.S.P.C.A.,—I know the percentage of Hindus and Muslims is maintained there,—these employees are trained to commit atrocities on the poor people, I mean the carters and fowl dealers. Sir, I will narrate very briefly and to the point some instances of their atrocities.

Sir, when these fowl dealers of North Bengal and East Bengal bring their fowls in baskets, these C.S.P.C.A. employees are ready to catch them just on the compound of the station, which they cannot do under the rules. Under the rules in one basket of a certain size, they are entitled to accommodate 80 fowls of small size, 40 fowls of medium size and 30 fowls of big size. But, Sir, who are the men who try these cases? Behind me possibly you will find one of the ex-Municipal Magistrates of Calcutta. Sir, I am sure he has dealt with at least several hundreds of thousand cases of fowls and cattle and other animals brought to him by the C.S.P.C.A. The procedure of that particular Court, I mean the Municipal Magistrate's Court, is

a thing which I would like to describe here. The poor people who are prosecuted by the C.S.P.C.A., go there and they are instructed to say "Husur, Kasur Giya"—(I have committed the offence), and the Magistrate says "Ten Rupees." If he were to say "Kasur Nai Giya" —(I have not committed the offence), if he utters that syllable, at once the Magistrate says "Rupees Twenty." If he insists that he has not done any offence, the order is Rs. 40. In this way the administration of justice is carried on by the Magistrates of Calcutta. Sir, the result is the fowl business in Calcutta has greatly deteriorated, thus affecting the poor Muslims of Bengal, because they are the fowl dealers. Sir, I will remind the House that the fowl is a very popular food not only among Muslims and Christians, but nowadays it is very popular among Hindus also. (Laughter.) So, Sir, every section of the House should come forward to protect this fowl business of Calcutta. Sir, it is under dual control.

The Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur of Dacca has granted Rs. 81,000 for this C.S.P.C.A. Formerly, it was one lakh every year. Sir, it is not his business to see how this money is spent. It is under the control of the Hon'ble the Home Minister, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin.

Now, coming to the question of membership, since I was refused admission into the C.S.P.C.A., I approached the Government to get a remedy. Sir, I was driven from post to pillar, from Calcutta to Darjeeling, and from Darjeeling to Calcutta, from Sir William Prentice to Sir Reid and to Nawab Farouki. I went on deputation after deputation. Nawab Sir Farouqi who was in charge of the Agricultural Department said that he had no control over this matter and directed me to Sir William Prentice. I went to Sir William Prentice. He said "this is the business of Mr. Faroqui, I have nothing to do with it."

Now, I ask the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca what control he has got over that organization, I mean the C.S.P.C.A. organization. The Hon'ble the Home Minister is not here. Otherwise I would ask him, and seriously, what control he has got over that organization——

**The Hon'ble H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** What about the fowls?

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I am coming to fowls.

Sir, the very Superintendent of the Sir Stuart Hogg's market has reported to me, I being a member of the Calcutta Corporation, about the atrocities of this C.S.P.C.A. people.

(At this stage, the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi HAFIZUDDIN CHOUDHURI:** Sir, I do not like to move my motion, but on the other hand, I would like to make some observations on the subject.

Sir, one session has come and gone; we are in the midst of another. But it is a pity that we all have discussed very little on the Veterinary Department. We have fought for a few services; shouted for too general a thing as rural uplift—catch penny phrases all. We have very little to plan concretely for the peasantry. This is the tragedy of the system which allows the rural constituencies to be represented by urban celebrities.

Sir, every cultivator is an industrialist of his scale. The live-stock is his fixed capital. The bullock under the plough is the capital that makes the pursuit of the industry possible for him, yielding thereby a more than proportionate return to his services. The Veterinary Department which looks to the prevention and cure of epidemic and diseases among these animals, is certainly a department of first rate national importance.

Sir, my long experiences of rural Bengal convinced me of the fact that the cattle is almost the barometer of rural prosperity. A shed of cattle is all that a cultivator prays for. This has been recognised by His Excellency the Governor-General and his august initiative in the movement for cattle improvement, entitles him to all our gratitude. But we have not followed his lead, it is regrettable.

Sir, we are now having a popular and responsible Ministry, ostensibly going all out for national improvement. Permit me, Sir, to point out that the creation of employments to the middle class young men is not the panacea of all our national ills. The Government spent five lacs forty three thousand rupees on the Veterinary Department for the year 1937-38. The proposed expenditure for 1938-39 for the same department is five lacs and fifty nine thousand rupees—much to commend them to our appreciation indeed. But a candid specification of the heads of increased expenditure liquidates all such sentiment and makes us realise that the Government is more after creation of posts and decoration of offices (hear, hear from the Congress Benches) than rendering any positive and real help to the agriculturists. The only effective expenditure in my opinion in these items is the control of rinderpest in the Chittagong Division.

Now, Sir, I would make a few suggestions. First of all let us realise that we should make the Veterinary Establishment a positive source of relief to the peasantry. It is no use, only having a book keeping existence. If we are convinced of this, let us go all out for bringing about a state of things which will make this possible. Ineffective recognition without consequent effort is worse than useless. I propose that we have a clinical laboratory for veterinary services in every district. These should be equipped with the primary apparatus for research and immediate diagnosis of cattle diseases. Relief on the right lines should follow every diagnosis from these sources. There should be a veterinary officer in every police station to report,

receive instructions or relief measures and render services when necessary. Such agents further, should educate the peasantry as to the ways and means of keeping their live-stock healthy and strong. We can no longer be idle spectators to the Satanic Carnival of ignorance taking its toll on life. Let us do something by all means.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I can assure Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemy—

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** May I point out one most salient fact: that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister tried to become a member, but he could not.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I can assure Mr. Jalaluddin Hashemy that at present this department has no control over the C.S.P.C.A., but I shall go into the question and see how far it is possible to control this Society through my department. The next thing I wish to tell my friend, Maulvi Md. Mozammel Huq is that it is unfortunate that Muslims and Scheduled Caste men are not found of the right type to be taken into the Veterinary Department. The Government is trying its level best to give every facility for the education of Muslims and Scheduled Castes, and I am coming with a scheme for awarding special scholarships to Muslim and Scheduled Caste boys to take up their training in the veterinary line.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Why not for the Caste Hindus?

**Mr. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE:** Why not appoint a committee for this purpose?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I can assure this House that I am taking up the question of the reorganisation of the Veterinary Department, taking into consideration all the suggestions that have been made by the hon'ble members.

The motion of Maulvi Jonab Ali Majumdar was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy was then put and lost. lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Habibullah Bahadur, of Dacca that the demand of Rs. 5,05,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "41—Veterinary" was then put and agreed to.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-45 p.m. on Thursday, the 24th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Thursday, the 24th March 1938, at 4-45 p.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 227 members.

The following member took his oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Crown:—

Maulvi Mafizuddin Ahmed.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Before the questions are taken up, may I draw the attention of the Leader of the House and the Hon'ble the Home Minister to the fact that a good deal of inconvenience is caused owing to the other House sitting up to very late hours. To-day it rose at 4-39 p.m. The time which is absolutely necessary before this House could meet is 45 minutes. I have taken figures for the last 3 weeks or so and I find that we had barely 25 minutes on most of the days and on a few days 30 minutes. Under the rules we have to keep the question papers on the table at least half an hour before, and it is a duty imposed on the Speaker of the House, and at the same time the Chamber has to be cleared and made ready for the sitting of this House. Unless steps are taken by the Hon'ble the Home Minister or the Leader of the House it will be very difficult because to-day we have come to the marginal point of the sitting and I hope steps will be taken in the matter.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I will look into the matter.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

### Refusal of admission of Mrs. Nilima Guha into the Eden Hospital, Calcutta.

*274. **Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware—

(*i*) that a lady named Nilima Guha, wife of Babu Sailendra Nath Guha, being in labour pains, was brought for admission to

the Eden Hospital, Calcutta, on the morning of the 7th March, 1938, in an ambulance car;

(*ii*) that after about an hour of her arrival there, a doctor (supposed to the Resident Surgeon) refused the lady's admission into the hospital and ordered her husband to remove her to some other hospital;

(*iii*) that the said lady, being not removed as directed, was taken out of the labour room to the verandah where she had to remain standing on her legs while bleeding, trembling and crying for pains; and

(*iv*) that after about an hour's standing on her legs in the verandah the said lady was removed in an ambulance car to the Campbell Hospital, where she gave birth to a male child immediately after her arrival there and that for some days lay in a precarious condition?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the husband of the said lady has submitted a petition to the Hon'ble Minister for proper redress?

(*c*) If so, has the Hon'ble Minister caused an inquiry to be made into the facts of his petition?

(*d*) If an inquiry has been made, what is the result of the inquiry?

(*e*) Has the Hon'ble Minister considered the desirability of taking steps against the officers responsible for the occurrence?

**MINISTER in charge of the PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali):** (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) to (*iv*) and (*b*) to (*d*) A petition was handed over to me by Babu Sailendra Nath Guha, husband of Mrs. Nilima Guha. I instructed the Surgeon-General to investigate into the complaint personally. The result of his inquiry is laid on the table.

(*e*) Does not arise, as it appears from the report of the Surgeon-General that the charges made against the officers have not been substantiated.

*Statement referred to in the reply to starred question No. 274, embodying the report of the inquiry made by the Surgeon-General, Bengal.*

Babu Sailendra Nath Guha brought his wife to the Eden Hospital at 7 a.m. on the 7th March, 1938. She was seen immediately by the nurse who forthwith sent information to Dr. Rakshit, the House Surgeon, as it appeared that the lady was about to go into labour. Mrs. Guha was examined by Dr. Rakshit at 7-35 a.m. Dr. Rakshit found that labour

had only just started but that the general condition of the lady was good. As she complained of having had diarrhœtic stools on the previous day, it would have been necessary, had she been admitted, to put her into the Isolation Ward where such cases are treated, this ward being used to keep such cases away from patients who are completely healthy. There are only 13 beds in the Isolation Block but on that morning there were already 26 patients in it, so that except only in a case of an imperatively urgent nature it was obviously quite impossible to take in another patient. As Mrs. Guha's case was not then of an urgent nature, the House Surgeon suggested to her husband that in view of the exceptionally overcrowded state of the Maternity Block she might be placed in the paying ward where a bed was available on payment of Rs. 2 per day and Rs. 10 for nursing fees, which were the usual charges levied in that ward. Babu Sailendra Nath Guha did not, however, agree to place his wife in the paying ward and he was, therefore, advised to try some other hospital for admission. Dr. Rakshit phoned up for an ambulance and tried his best to get one but was unable to do so. At 8-15 a.m. Dr. Bhowmik, Resident Surgeon, also examined Mrs. Guha and found her to be going into labour. He accordingly phoned to the Campbell Hospital and arranged for a bed for her there.

Mrs. Guha was allowed to remain in the Examination Room till 8-30 a.m. when, the room being required for a more urgent case, she was requested to lie on a trolley in the verandah but she preferred to sit on the bench there. It is not a fact that she was in great pain or was bleeding profusely or that at any time she was unattended or uncared for. At 9-15 a.m. the ambulance arrived and she was at once removed to the Campbell Hospital in it. The Teacher of Midwifery in the Campbell Hospital has reported that she was admitted at 9-22 a.m., that she was then in labour and that only a few drops of blood were found on her clothes but that her general condition was then good and a child was born to her at 11-15 a.m. Her subsequent condition is also reported to have been good. It is not a fact that her condition at the Campbell Hospital was precarious for some days.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Surgeon-General examined the lady?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Perhaps not.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Surgeon-General examined Mr. Sailendra Nath Guha, the husband of that lady?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I understand not.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will he be pleased to state whether the clothes which the lady was putting on while she was in the Medical College Hospital, was examined by the Surgeon-General?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think not.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** In view of the statement of the Surgeon-General that Dr. Rakshit examined the lady at 7-35 a.m. and that a child was born to her at 11-15 a.m., does not the Hon'ble Minister hold that it was an urgent case?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** That is a matter of opinion.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Is it a fact that Babu Sailendra Nath Guha whose petition has been received by the Hon'ble Minister, complained before him that the lady was kept standing in the verandah of the Medical College Hospital for about an hour?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The petition was there. It was made over to the Surgeon-General and an enquiry was made on that.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** In view of that fact, does the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability to re-enquire into the statement of the Surgeon-General in the presence of that Mr. Sailendra Nath Guha who can challenge or verify the statement of Dr. Rakshit?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Well, Sir. Even if that is done, it will come to this whether it was a case of an emergent nature or not, and it appears that she was required to make room for another emergent case. That really indicates that the staff there took into consideration whether this case was more emergent or not.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** In view of the fact that the lady delivered the child within two hours of her removal from the Medical College Hospital to the Campbell Hospital, does not the Hon'ble Minister consider that this was an emergent case?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, it is a question of comparative necessity.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that evidence collected by the Surgeon-General was of an *ex-parte* nature and no opportunity was given to the complainant to put his case before him?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think, Sir, I have already stated that the husband of the lady was not examined and that the enquiry was made in his absence.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many of the occupants of the Maternity Block were delivered of their children that day or on the subsequent day?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I would require notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there was any unseemly language used to the lady or to her husband by the staff of the Medical College during their stay?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The report is just the other way.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to the statement we find that "it is not that she was *in great pain*". What led the Surgeon-General to think that the lady had *no pain* whatsoever?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The report is based on the examination of the lady by the officers of the Medical College and it appears they thought that this was a case that might be transferred to some other hospital whereas the other case that was taken in was a more urgent one.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is prepared to make an independent enquiry into this complaint in the presence of independent persons other than those against whom the enquiry is made?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It is very difficult to understand what is meant by "an independent enquiry". If it be that apart from this that the husband should be sent for and his statement taken, I have not the slightest objection.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** In view of the fact that the Surgeon-General did not examine the lady, nor the husband nor the Doctor who was accompanying the lady that day and whose mention has been made in the petition to the Hon'ble Minister, does not the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability in the public interests, that these matters should be more thoroughly enquired into in the presence of some independent non-official persons, and the lady also should be examined?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** Sir, while sympathising fully with the lady and her husband, it appears almost clear to me that very little useful purpose will be served by an examination of that nature, because after all, it is a question of opinion as to whether of the two, the one case which was not admitted was more emergent than the other, and for this we have got to depend on the opinion of the officers who were there.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Does not the Hon'ble Minister consider it desirable that since the lady was made to stand in the verandah for one hour and also that she was bleeding during that period, a further enquiry is necessary in public interest?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** These facts have been completely negatived by the report. I am afraid that if the petitioner be re-examined the result will be a contradiction. There is nothing more to be done on this point, which will take us an inch further. We have got a report from the authorities of the Campbell Medical Hospital also, and I do not think that any useful purpose will be served by making a fresh enquiry. I am ever ready to have the husband examined, but I doubt very much whether it will take us one step further.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** Does the Hon'ble Minister know the difference between "negatived" and "denied", legally and linguistically?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question hardly arises.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** The Hon'ble Minister has stated in answer that no useful purpose will be served. What does he mean by that? It is after all a serious matter.

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The object of holding an enquiry is to get at the truth. Here we have got the report, and an enquiry has been made; and the statement made by the husband is also there. So, if an enquiry is made again the question will arise as to what is to be believed, and, therefore, I have stated that no useful purpose will be served by holding a fresh enquiry.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Does not the Hon'ble Minister consider it desirable that in view of the fact that the last enquiry has not elicited much information a further enquiry is necessary?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I cannot follow the hon'ble member. On what point does he want an enquiry? If there is any definite point which he can suggest, then I am prepared to order an enquiry

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** In the absense of any definite entry in the book maintained in the Ambulance Office, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to enquire whether Dr. Rakshit has made a false statement or not?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The hon'ble member has made a statement that there is an absence of entry in a certain book in the office of the Calcutta Corporation. I do not know what enquiry the hon'ble member wants me to make in this negative something.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in view of the serious allegations made before him he does not think that the truth would have come out if the complainant could have been present at the time of the enquiry and cross-examine the accused person with regard to certain points raised by him?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** It appears to me that the enquiry was, to a certain extent, defective, because if the whole thing had been done in the presence of the complainant, all these supplementary questions would not have arisen. But the Surgeon-General is not a lawyer. The petitioner is a lawyer, but the Surgeon-General is not. I plead guilty to a certain extent, I feel that it would have been better for me to order that the enquiry should be held in the presence of the husband.

### Scheduled Castes in the Chittagong District Board.

*275. **Mr. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that no representative of the Scheduled Castes was nominated to the Chittagong District Board?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability of appointing their representative to the said Board in the future?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The claims of the Scheduled Castes will be duly considered.

**Babu KSHETRA NATH SINGHA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government think it desirable to issue circulars to District Officers for the purpose?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I understand, Sir, that a circular already exists for the purpose.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** Is it possible for the Hon'ble Minister to give any idea of the time as to when the claims of the scheduled castes will be duly considered?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** This question will be considered when the occasion for nominating members to District and Local Boards arises.

### Kulti Outfall Scheme of Calcutta Corporation.

*276. **Mr. JASIMUDDIN AHMED:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether the Calcutta Corporation Kulti Outfall Scheme has been examined by Government?

(*b*) What are the reasons for not sanctioning the scheme?

(*c*) Have the Government obtained opinion through their experts that there is apprehension of the Kulti being dead in the near future?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Does not arise, as the scheme was sanctioned in July, 1935, subject to certain conditions.

(*c*) Yes. Government are advised that the life of the Kulti Gang can be prolonged by acquiring a spill area on either side of the river as well as by treating the sewage before its discharge into the river. The matter has been referred to the Calcutta Corporation for their consideration and necessary action.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the scheme was submitted to Government for their consideration?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think several years before 1935.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** What is the reason for the delay in sanctioning the scheme?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** That was long before we came into office, and it is very difficult for me to give any reply without proper notice. But, at the same time, I think that a reply was given in this House either in this session or in the previous session.

**Mr. ANUKUL CHANDRA DAS:** When was the matter referred to the Calcutta Corporation?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** After the inspection held by myself.

**Mr. ANUKUL CHANDRA DAS:** Has any reply been given by the Calcutta Corporation?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think that the matter is still under their consideration.

**Mr. ANUKUL CHANDRA DAS:** Has any provision been made in the scheme itself for treating the sewage before discharging it in the proposed spill area in the Kulti outfall scheme?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I think not.

## Kurigram Union Board, Rangpur.

*277. **Mr. JATINDRA NATH CHAKRABARTY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware—

(*i*) that the date of election of the President of the newly formed Kurigram Union Board (No. 5) in the subdivision of Kurigram, district Rangpur, was fixed by the Circle Officer on the 29th January last and the members were duly informed of the date 13 days before;

(*ii*) that in the afternoon of the 28th January, the members were served with notices by the said Circle Officer that the date of the meeting had been postponed to the 7th February, 1938;

(*iii*) that the Circle Officer concerned changed the date on the application of three nominated members filed before the Subdivisional Officer of Kurigram on the ground of—

(1) illness of one of the applicant's daughter, and

(2) private business of the other two; and

(*iv*) that on the 28th January, elected members filed a petition before the Subdivisional Officer of Kurigram protesting against the changing of date of election of the President, but the Subdivisional Officer refused to take any action upon it?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether this fact was represented to him by a telegram?

(*c*) If so, what steps, if any, did he take in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** A statement is laid on the Library table.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what authority there was for the Circle Officer to change the date? Under what rules, framed under the Act, did he do so?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** In my opinion, the grounds on which the postponement was made are not adequate.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Sir, my question has not been answered. My question was—what was the authority of the Circle Officer to change the date?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** The point is, I do not quite understand the question. If an opinion is asked from me as to whether the Circle Officer is under the law authorised to change the date, it becomes a pure question of law and not a question of fact, and as such I am not called upon to give an opinion on a point of law.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why the election was postponed at the instance of three nominated members when six elected members opposed it?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I have already answered that question.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to take the opinion of the Advocate-General in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI:** I am myself thinking of taking his opinion on this point for the purpose of issuing a circular to the subordinate authorities.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the result of the subsequent election—whether a nominated or elected member was elected?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

## Advisory Committee for Muhammadan Marriage Registrars in the 24-Parganas.

*278. **Mr. MD. AMIR ALI MIA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the names of members on the Advisory Committee in the 24-Parganas for selecting candidates for appointment as Muhammadan Marriage Registrars showing against each the interest they represent; and

(*b*) whether the Committee constituted has satisfied all the conditions laid down in the Government notification?

**MINISTER in charge of EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq):** (*a*) A statement is placed on the table.

(*b*) No; there was no Muslim member on the District Board to represent Barrackpore subdivision and the Muslim member representing Sadar subdivision refused to accept membership of the Advisory Committee, their places were, therefore, given to other Muslims. The Committee will, however, be Muslims reconstituted in the near future in accordance with the Government notification.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause* (*a*) *of starred question No. 278.*

(*i*) M. O. Carter, Esq., M.C., I.C.S., *President.*

(*ii*) Mr. Faizul Huq, Second Police Magistrate, Alipore, *Vice-President.*

(*iii*) Mr. Sital Chandra Banerjee, District Sub-Registrar, Alipore, *Secretary.*

*Members.*

(*a*) Mr. Jasimuddin Ahmed, M.L.A. (Diamond Harbour), Secretary, 24-Parganas Muslim Association.

(*b*) Dr. Mominul Huq, Subarnapur, Prithiba P. O., 24-Parganas, (representing Barasat subdivision).

(c) Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdur Rahman, M.L.A., Khan Bahadur's Lodge, P. O. Bashirhat (representing Bashirhat subdivision).

(d) Maulvi Keramat Ali Naskar, Mograhat P. O., 24-Parganas (representing Diamond Harbour subdivision).

(e) Maulvi Abdul Aziz, Dadpur, P. O. Badu, 24-Parganas (representing Barrackpore subdivision).

(f) Maulvi Bazlur Rahman, Honorary Magistrate, Alipore (representing Sadar subdivision).

**Expenditure for the education of the Scheduled Castes, Muslims, Europeans and Anglo-Indians.**

*279. **Mr. RASIK LAL BISWAS:** (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to lay a statement showing for the year 1936-37 the amount of money spent by the Government specially for (1) higher, (2) secondary, (3) primary and (4) other education—

(i) of the Scheduled Castes of Bengal; and

(ii) of the (1) Muslims; (2) Europeans, and (3) Anglo-Indians?

(b) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of a feeling amongst the Scheduled Castes or depressed classes that the Government grant for their education should be enhanced to meet their needs?

(c) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what has been the latest decision (if any) of the Government on the matter of enhanced grant for the education of the Scheduled Castes?

(d) Are the Government considering the desirability of raising the grant to comply with the prayers and demands of the Scheduled Castes in the matter of education in the near future? If not, why not?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** (a) (i) There is no specific provision in the budget for the education of the Scheduled Castes. But special facilities in the shape of grants, scholarships, etc., are provided for the education of backward and Scheduled Castes, which amount to Rs. 1,18,697, viz., Rs. 22,576 for scholarships and Rs. 96,121 for general education.

(ii) (1) With the exception of the following item, no specific provision is made for the education of Muslims—

Madrasahs—Rs. 1,92,817.

Special facilities are provided in the shape of scholarships which amount to Rs. 1,02,272.

(2) and (3) Rs. 12,76,849.

(b) Yes.

(*c*) Special scholarships for Scheduled Castes were created in 1937, viz.—

(1) Two scholarships of Rs. 240 per session for each year of the Intermediate Course at the Bengal Engineering College and two scholarships of Rs. 300 per session for each year of the Degree Course of the college, each tenable for one year.

(2) Two scholarships of Rs. 10 each per month tenable for two years, at the Ashanullah School of Engineering.

(3) Two scholarships of Rs. 7-8 each per month, tenable for four years, at the Government School of Art.

(*d*) Provision has been made in the next year's budget for an ultimate recurring expenditure of Rs. 50,000 for giving special facilities to the students of the Scheduled Castes.

**Babu KSHETRA NATH SINGHA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the special scholarships provided for the scheduled castes students are being taken advantage of fully by them?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The special scholarships were created after I came into office and I have no information as to whether any student has come forward to take advantage of it. If necessary, I will make enquiry.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** With reference to (*a*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the castes which go by the name of backward classes in Bengal?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** At the present moment I cannot give an answer off-hand, but I think there are some Santhals and in the district of Backerganj, some Mugs,—a very small community.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** With reference to (*a*)(*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Madrasahs include old-scheme Madrasahs or new-scheme Madrasahs or both?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The present policy of the Government is to give facilities both to old-scheme as well as to new-scheme Madrasahs.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** With reference to (*a*) (*2*) and (*3*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that Europeans and Anglo-Indians are fabulously rich in India and require no special grant for the education of their children?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. SIBNATH BANERJI:** With reference to (*a*) (*2*), (*3*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Europeans and Anglo-Indians are given huge educational grants because they are very backward in education?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Free and compulsory primary education in Mymensingh.**

***280. Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMED:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state what will be the probable cost for free and compulsory primary education in the district of Mymensingh?

(*b*) Whether the Government are aware that the District School Board of Mymensingh has recently unanimously passed a resolution requesting the Government to make the free primary education compulsory in that district?

(*c*) Whether the Hon'ble Minister is aware that the district of Mymensingh has voluntarily taken over the burden of education cess?

(*d*) Do the Government propose to introduce compulsory free primary education in that district without delay by giving additional grant necessary for the purpose from the provincial revenue?

(*e*) Whether the existing Inspecting Staff in the district of Mymensingh has been found adequate for proper inspection of the free primary schools started very recently in the district?

(*f*) If not, what steps do the Government propose to take for proper and effective supervision of those schools?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** (*a*) Rs. 13,50,000 approximately.

(*b*) No.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Compulsion will be introduced by Government in the district when the facilities for primary education in existence justify the enforcement of such compulsion. During the next year an attempt will be made to supplement, out of general revenues, the cess receipts.

(*e*) Yes, for the present.

(*f*) Does not arise.

**Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMED:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the data on which calculation of approximate cost has been made?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** The calculation has been made according to the basis of imposition of the cess as laid down in section 29 of the Primary Education Act.

**Maulvi ABDUL HAKIM:** ময়মনসিংহ জেলার প্রজাসমিতির যোগে কৃষক প্রজা সভা আহ্বান করিয়া খাজানার নিরিখ হ্রাস না করা পর্য্যন্ত কৃষিজীবি লোকদের উপর যেন শিক্ষা কর ধার্য্য না করা হয়, এই মর্ম্মে প্রস্তাব পাশ করিয়া তাহার অবিকল নকল আপনার নিকট প্রেরণ করা হইয়াছিল কি না?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** সে বিষয় বিবেচনা কোরতে পারি কিন্তু আপনাকে—

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** You are not entitled to answer in Bengali.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** (বাংলায় না বোল্লে উনি বুঝতেই পারবেন না) আপনাকে এ সম্বন্ধে কোন আশ্বাস দিতে পারি না। তবে আমি চিন্তা করবো ও বিবেচনা কোরবো এই পর্য্যন্ত বোলতে পারি।

**Maulvi ABDUL HAKIM:** প্রস্তাবের নকল যে পাঠান হইয়াছিল উহা পাইয়াছেন কি?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** আজ্ঞে না, আমি পাই নাই।

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when was the District School Board established in the district of Mymensingh?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I think about four years ago.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why during the course of these 4 or 5 years the requisite number of schools have not been established in the district of Mymensingh?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** When I came into office the Board had already been established nearly two or three years. I am responsible for the last 6 months and the new Board is already working there.

**Maulvi TAMIZUDDIN KHAN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there is any scheme for the establishment of the necessary number of schools in the district, and, if so, within what time is it expected that the requisite number of schools will be established?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** There is a scheme which has been fully worked out and as the hon'ble member is aware, a Special Officer has been engaged in compiling statistics. From all the information that I could gather I expect that the whole of Mymensingh will have primary education introduced in about 2 years.

**Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMED:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the geographical situation of the villages in the district is such that the number of schools necessary cannot be calculated on area or population basis alone as laid down in the Resolution of the Government for providing one school for an area of 3 square miles or for 2,000 population in the alternative?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I agree, but this is the general rule by which we are guided. In any case, the District Magistrate in consultation with the District School Board is taking steps to see that schools are situated in such a manner that small children may not have inconvenience in attending schools from their homes.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether representations from various public organisations and public bodies and telegrams were sent to the Chief Minister objecting to the introduction of free and primary education in the district of Mymensingh with the tax?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** It is true that telegrams were sent; representations were also sent; meetings were held and that was the reason why for about six months I hesitated to take any action. I have explained the position repeatedly in this House. I waited if I could find any alternative and I confess that I have not been able to find out any alternative and much against my wishes I have been forced to adopt the method laid down under the Primary Education Act. I am not an advocate of the system of taxing but where tax is necessary I cannot help it.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the resolution passed by the School Boards come to the Government immediately after they are passed?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Not necessarily.

**Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMED:** With reference to answer (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the source of his information?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I have not yet been informed, but I wish to make an enquiry.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is meant by "facilities for primary education in existence"? Facilities in what direction?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Facilities for primary education mean primarily the facilities given to small children for attending primary schools where there are a sufficient number of schools so situated as to render it convenient for small children to attend schools from their homes.

**A question of privilege.**

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I rise on a question of privilege. I have been noticing that for the last three days the number of questions has been rather too small. I understand that quite a large number is still lying unreplied to. It appears that the procedure so far followed does not suit either the departments of Government or your department. Or, is it due to some other reasons? We want your protection for this important privilege of the House to get interpellations replied to in good time. We have only 4 or 5 more days before us. May we know what steps you are going to take to ensure that all the questions are replied to in the course of this session?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** As to what I shall do it is very difficult to say, because I have not considered this matter. I can say this much that the steps which I took was to give information to Government once about the end of February and again on the 20th of March last (i.e., on Sunday last). I tabulated a list of all questions that are pending with the different departments and sent a copy to each Minister and each Secretary to Government suggesting that in view of a very large number of questions still pending, Government might be pleased to send replies to all questions every day this week. So far as the last week was concerned the actual position was that about 300 questions were pending with the departments and I have drawn special attention to this fact on your behalf. I have done all I possibly could and I am prepared to show the tabulated list to the Leaders of the different groups.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May we have an assurance from the Hon'ble the Home Minister that all the questions will be answered before the session is over?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have not yet heard even in the nature of an assurance from the Hon'ble the Home Minister after I sent the list, because he was very busy for the last two or three days and could not

discuss this matter with me, but I hope that he will take an early opportunity to see to this matter.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The first mistake which the hon'ble member is making is when he assumes that the Assembly will be over in 4 or 5 days' time. As far as I can see the Assembly will sit at least for another two weeks. I think there is ample time and I can assure the members of this House that all the questions will be answered in time.

## Motion for adjournment.

**Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL:** I beg leave of the House to move my motion for the adjournment of the business of the Assembly for which I have got the Hon'ble Speaker's consent. May I hand over the written statement and the consent of the Hon'ble Speaker?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** What is the motion about?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is about the issue of orders under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code by the Subdivisional Officer of Contai in connection with certain realisation of rent——

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Since I received the notice of this adjournment motion, I have put myself in touch with the Collector of Midnapore for full facts, and I am expecting the information. So this matter cannot be taken up to-day. I propose to discuss this question with the hon'ble member and place all the facts before him. If after that he still feels inclined to move his motion he might do so.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think under the circumstances it is better to have this matter postponed. I will waive the question of urgency so far as this motion is concerned in view of the fact that the information is not immediately available.

**Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL:** May I know from the Hon'ble Minister if this will be taken up in a day or two?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I might be absolutely frank with you. I will be really relunctant to take this matter up during the budget session. If the information is received in a day or two this matter may be taken up on Tuesday.

**Mr. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE:** May we know from the Revenue Minister as to whether orders under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code have been issued by the District Officer without reference to Government?

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Yes; Government had no information on this subject.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### 25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think it will be convenient to the House as we have got about 2½ hours for two demands if I close the debate on General Administration—Debt Conciliation about 6-40 and take up Co-operation after that or shall I continue the debate on General Administration—Debt Conciliation a bit later.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May we not request you to sit till 9 p.m.?

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Mr. Speaker, may I give you proper intimation that we, on this side of the House, desire that free and proper discussion must take place on every item in the budget demand and it would be simply stultifying the privileges of this House if attempts are made by those who are in the majority to shorten the period of discussion. Under these circumstances, we may have to refuse to go out of the House, when it is adjourned, I think that under British Parliamentary practice we do not require your presence to stay in this House so far as the continuance of this debate is concerned, although, Sir, you may have an opinion to the contrary.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. Dr. Sanyal, I think that the matter of adjournment is entirely a matter within the discretion of the Speaker, and if members desire to stay on after the House is adjourned, I have absolutely no objection to their doing so, but then when the Chair is absent, the House is not sitting!

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 24,45,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation."

In presenting this demand to the House I do not think I should be justified in taking too long in explaining the items that go to make this

demand, for they are very simple and they have been sufficiently explained in the budget. Nor do I feel that I should be justified in anticipating the criticisms that may be levelled against this department by hon'ble members of this House. I will wait till my friends make them. But you know, Sir, that this is a new subject which has been in operation for a little over a year. It is still linked up with the General Administration for the very simple reason that we have yet to depend upon the officers of that department for the administration of this subject.

I am, however, surprised to some extent at the number of motions that have been tabled as also at the nature of these motions. Without meaning any disrespect to the hon'ble members of this House it seems to me, Sir, that there has been some amount of misapprehension about the administration of this subject. While waiting for the criticisms and the suggestions to be offered, I think I should try at this stage to clear up one or two of these matters. The House knows full well that this branch of the administration is based upon the operation of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act, 1936. As a member of the then Government, Sir, you know the history of this legislation. My esteemed colleague the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin was then the Member in charge of this department. So far as I see, before me, I find only a few of my hon'ble friends here now, who were members of the then Bengal Legislative Council which passed this measure. I hope, Sir, it will not be impertinent on my part if I were to remind the hon'ble members that this legislation was undertaken on the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture as also on that of the Economic Enquiry Committee. It transpired then that the rural masses were very much indebted; so much so, that they had not the means to pay in full all their debts to their creditors, whoever they may be, whether landlords, creditors or banking concerns like Co-operative Societies, or things of that sort. It was considered necessary that some steps should be taken to minimise this heavy burden of rural indebtedness and to see that this indebtedness is scaled down. The basic principle of this legislation, I may be excused to submit to this House, is that all the creditors of the indebted agriculturist might be induced to be satisfied with whatever the poor debtor is able to pay after keeping to himself just enough to maintain him and his family. This is the basic principle, as I have said before, of this legislation.

Now, Sir, as I indicated a moment ago, the measure was enacted by the late Bengal Legislative Council of which body I had the honour of being a member. I do not know what time it took the late Government to come to their judgment with regard to the principle and the details, but we know that the Bill was introduced in July 1935. After a detailed debate the Bill was referred to a Select Committee, and so far as I remember, my hon'ble friends Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi

Abdul Hamid Shah, Mr. W. C. Wordsworth, and Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdur Rahman, were members of the Select Committee. They sat and discussed the Bill in Select Committee in the month of October 1935 and submitted a report. The Bill as reported was taken into consideration in the late Council on the floor of this House in the months of November and December of that year, and perhaps on or about the 23rd December of that year it was passed by the late Council, and it received the assent of the authorities and became law some time early in 1936. The rules for the guidance of the boards at the various stages of dealing with applications that would be forthcoming had to be settled and this inevitably took some time for the Government. The Act was put into operation in 16 districts, to start with, and Special Officers were appointed to guide and advise these boards. This was done some time in September-December, 1936.

We all know, Sir, that the province went through the general elections at about that time, and Government required the services of all their officers, and these Special Officers were also employed in conducting the general elections. The position therefore is this: that though boards were established they could not start work still some time later and we find that towards the end of the last financial year, 1,099 ordinary boards and 12 special boards were established in some of these districts. The Finance Member of the late Government, Sir John Woodhead, who was reputed for his very great caution was not very much willing to extend the operation of the Act to the whole province all at once, for he perhaps felt that it might indirectly introduce various difficulties in the normal activities of society. They had also to take into consideration the reports of the local officers and when they found that some of the districts had not been able to get over the local difficulties due to depression and distress, it was then considered proper to establish these boards in those districts as soon as they desired. It was therefore thought fit not to extend the operation of this Act in the districts of Khulna, Burdwan, Birbhum, Nadia and a few other districts.

Sir, after the formation of the new Government in April last we have taken a definite decision that we must have as many boards as may be necessary to deal with this question of scaling down rural indebtedness to the manageable capacity of the agriculturists, in the interior of the province and hon'ble members will be pleased to remember that they were good enough to give me a sum of Rs. 12 lakhs at the time of the last budget for this department. Our idea was that we should establish about 3,000 boards by the end of the current financial year and that this must be done with respect to the whole of the province. We have, however, been able to establish 2,791 boards in all including one or more special boards in the subdivisions of those districts. We

examined the position once again and found that we would not be justified in establishing these boards in the remaining districts at once and therefore in the beginning of the current financial year some of the districts like Nadia, Murshidabad were left out. But this condition no longer exists and we have already established these boards in all districts except Nadia, Darjeeling and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. We have recently had a proposal from the Collector of Nadia that these boards should be established in that district as well, and we propose to have these boards in that district, from the beginning of the next month, that is, in the month of April. We have also decided to establish at least one special board in each of the subdivisions whose jurisdiction extends over the whole of the subdivisional area so that even if there be no ordinary board in any particular union, the people there may be able to put in their applications to the special boards and if there is any proceedings pending against them in the civil court they might avail themselves of the opportunity afforded to them by section 34 of the Act.

Without going into details as to the progress made by these boards in this work I should just indicate for the information of the House that up to the 31st December last the boards that were functioning received 372,608 applications of which little more than half came from the debtors and the rest from the creditors; 23,388 of these cases have been settled by awards and a little over 11,000 were dismissed for some reason or other. The cases settled represent a total claim of Rs. 69,75,361 of which Rs. 47,87,746 were determined as the amount of the debt existing under section 18 of the Act. Awards were given for Rs. 35,05,599 to be paid in suitable instalments.

We have had interesting reports from all over the province to show that in point of fact these boards were perfectly alive to their sense of responsibility with which they have been invested and are disposing of the cases brought before them to the satisfaction of all concerned. The reports have been collected and published through the Press Officers from time to time. I might be permitted to place before the House a few of such instances. In the case of a mortgagee in possession in Jamalpur subdivision in Mymensingh district, the creditor agreed to forego the entire claim of as much as Rs. 980. In the same subdivision two other claims of Rs. 100 and Rs. 175 were similarly written off. Again, there have been cases in which similar claims have been settled for cash payments of a nominal amount, as in Netrokona subdivision a claim for Rs. 194 was settled for a cash payment of Rs. 8 only. In Serajganj subdivision of Pabna district debts amounting to Rs. 407, Rs. 119 and Rs. 150 were settled, respectively, at Rs. 147, Rs. 27-8 and Rs. 125. Another debt of Rs. 545 covered by a civil court decree in the same subdivision was settled at Rs. 110. In a Midnapore case a debtor mortgaged his entire property consisting of 18 bighas of lands and

homestead for a loan only of Rs. 690 which subsequently amounted to Rs. 892. He also contracted unsecured small debts from 11 persons to the extent of Rs. 222 and arrears of rent amounting to Rs. 75 were also due to the landlord. The creditors realised that it was impossible for the debtor to repay the debts even in 20 years. So with the consent of all the parties, the following agreement was reached. The homestead and 6 bighas of lands were left to the debtor and the remaining 12 bighas of lands were transferred to the mortgagee in full satisfaction of the debt. And the small creditors gave up their claims. In a case from Bakarganj where a cultivator borrowed in 1926 Rs. 300 in exchange for the usufructuary mortgage of 2½ acres of land, the principal and the interest to be extinguished after 1,200 years, the Board settled by effecting the return of half of the land to the borrower immediately and the other half to the creditor for a period of 14 years who also agreed to pay rent for the whole.

Questions have been asked from time to time in this House as also in the other which show that there has been an accumulation of cases and a fair number of proceedings in the civil courts has been tied up and that has been due to some extent to the fact that some Boards have not been vested with all the powers under the Act to effect a settlement. It is no doubt true that there has been an accumulation in some places, but honourable members will realise that the members of these Boards are mostly non-official gentlemen. They are not whole-time officers of Government and therefore they cannot sit and do not sit from day to day.

Next, regard being had to the nature and number of cases and regard being had also to the fact that they require constant attention and guidance from officers they have not been able to make a speedy disposal of their cases. But we have issued circulars from time to time wherein we have given them definite instructions as to how they are to speed up their cases. With regard to the powers, I can at once say that where there had been recommendation from the Collectors, we invested the Boards with any power that was wanted excepting, of course, the power of declaring an applicant insolvent within the meaning of section 22 of the Act, as it is considered unnecessary for the debt is always scaled down to the man's paying capacity.

It must be clear to the House that the responsibility of the administration of these Boards at their initial stage rests mostly with the Collectors of the districts, and it is for them to suggest as to which Boards should be invested with powers under different sections of the Act. In the last letter issued recently it was suggested that powers under sections 9(*2*) and 13(*2*) should be given to all good Boards, and under section 19(*1*)(*b*) to all really good Boards. Up to date nearly 600 Boards have been empowered under section 9(*2*) and nearly 300

Boards under section 13(2) of the Act. We have now decided that we hall empower all the Boards under sections 9(2) and 13(2) of the Act.

With regard to the debt due to a Co-operative Society, it must be nade clear that this also does come within the purview of this Act, and vith the only difference that this Society is not like an ordinary *mahajan* ınd that therefore perhaps it is not unreasonable to feel that the work-ng expenses of the Central Banks should be kept in view in settling he debts. The Central Banks have been definitely instructed to appear oefore the Boards, and I can assure the House that there will be no lifficulty in settling the debts of these societies as well——

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** How long will you take, Mr. Mullick?

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Only two minutes more, Sir.

As regards the notice contemplated in section 34 for a stay of a pro-ceeding in the civil court, the view was that the status of a debtor should be determined under section 20 on a notice issued under section 12 of the Act. We have realised the difficulty and we have decided that the best course will be that on receipt of an application a notice for an *ad interim* stay should be issued at once and that the matter should be carefully looked into in the course of a month within which time a further notice should go, giving the final decision of the Board with regard to this status and the result shall be forwarded to the civil court——

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** The Hon'ble Minister has taken 20 minutes, Sir. May we know how long more he will take?

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** I have not taken 20 minutes, to be sure. I will take only two minutes more.

The working of the Act for over a year shows that the Act requires amendment with respect to some of the provisions. An amending Bill has been introduced in the Legislative Council by my friend Khan Bahadur Syed Moazzemuddin Hossain, and a few amending Bills have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly by some of our honourable friends. We have already put the suggestions made therein under examination. We have also taken suggestions of the local officers in this respect and personally speaking I feel that an amendment to remove some of the working difficulties with regard to the following among other matters is necessary at an early date, namely, (1) definition of debt and debtor, (2) usufructuary mortgage, and (3) assessed liabilities of a member of a co-operative society under liquidation.

Suggestions made by the honourable member will also be considered. As soon as the budget session is over, I propose to take this matter up in all seriousness and when the preliminaries are settled, I shall take the necessary step to introduce the Bill in the Assembly so that the working difficulties that we have felt may be removed at an early date.

As I have said before, I shall wait for suggestions of my honourable friends so that I may be in a position to explain the situation to them and I do not think I shall be justified in taking any more time of the House at this stage.

With these words, Sir, I put my demand to the House.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 24,45,000 under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Concilition" be reduced by Rs. 100, to raise a discussion on the working of the Debt Conciliation Boards.

We, Sir, on this side of the House have often felt whether it is worth while continuing our efforts to improve the administration of the Government. Whenever a cut motion is brought forward and a debate follows, the Hon'ble Ministers treat the debate with the utmost indifference. Many of the Hon'ble Ministers are not in the House, and those who are in the House often walk up to all possible groups——

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** What about the members? They are also not here.

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, may I submit that I am in charge of the department in question, and I am paying all attention to all what my hon'ble friend is saying.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** So am I.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** It is not difficult to guess whether from those places to which the Ministers generally walk up during the debate, they attend to the debate or are after their own work. Nor is there any indication that the subject matter of the debate ever receives serious consideration from the Ministers at any time after the debate has concluded. For, whenever we find anything new in the next Budget that is all a distribution of patronage, and a part of the Government propaganda. Nothing has been the result of the debate which preceded it.

Sir, I have brought forward this cut motion to discuss the working of the Debt Settlement Boards. The interest of the agriculturists has been neglected too long, and when Debt Settlement Boards were established about two years ago, they were long overdue. In their working

there is much to be desired. It must not be forgotten that these Debt Settlement Boards exercise very responsible powers. They have final and exclusive jurisdiction in those matters which usually come before the Courts,—the Munsifs and the Subordinate Judges. Not only that. Their decision is not open to appeal except to the limited extent for which provision is made in the Act itself. Under these circumstances, the Chairman and the Members of the Conciliation Board must be men capable, upright, of the highest integrity, scrupulously honest and above suspicion. My question is, do we get such men? I hold this definite opinion that so long as the present system of election to the Union Board continues, we will not get such men. In the selection of the Chairman and members of the Conciliation Boards, the President and the members of the Union Boards are most prominent in the picture, and the Presidents of the Union Boards are generally selected as Chairmen of the Conciliation Boards. Is it known to the Government—I do not find the Minister in charge of the Local Self-Government Department here and that is exactly what I complain——

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, I am sitting here.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** I find you there, but not the Minister of the Local Self-Government Department for whom specially these criticisms are intended.

Now, is it known to the Government how the system of open voting for the Union Boards is working? Is it known to the Government that when the Zamindar or the Talukdar or the Mahajan or any of their hench-men is a candidate for the Union Board election, there is hardly any scope for free choice in the voting. The Zamindar has previously proclaimed dire consequences to those who will go against him. He goes to the polling booth, strikes terror in the hearts of all and watches keenly how votes are being cast. Many voters of the Union Boards have complained to me that this open voting prevents them from exercising their franchise freely and properly. Very anxious enquiries have been made from time to time in this House from the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Local Self-Government as to when the ballot system will be introduced in the Union Board elections, and we have got the stereotyped reply "the matter is under consideration." Are we to take it that the Government is so very demented as not to know——

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** It is the members that are demented, not the Government.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** It is the members of Government who have not yet changed the system.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** It is the members that form the Government. Government is an impersonal thing.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** I am speaking of the Government as a whole and not merely of a particular Minister.

Is it not the duty of the Government to place the voter in such a position as to enable him to exercise his free choice?

Sir, I have spoken so long on Union Board election, because the two, the Union Board and the Debt Conciliation Board, go hand in hand together. The Debt Conciliation Board is only another aspect of the Union Board, and generally we find the same men in both, and so long as open voting for the Union Boards is not abolished and replaced by ballot voting, we cannot get the right type of men so very desirable not merely for the Union Boards, but also for the Debt Conciliation Boards which exercise responsible powers in the locality.

Now, Sir, I pass on to another matter, namely, the hardship on the agriculturists which has followed certain recent decisions of the Calcutta High Court. The Calcutta High Court in interpreting section 34 of the Act has laid down that whenever a sale has taken place although the sale has not been confirmed, the executing Court will not accept a notice from the Conciliation Boards, and will not stay its proceedings. The High Court is of opinion that as soon as a sale has taken place, although the sale has not yet been confirmed the debt is extinguished. I submit, Sir, that is hardly a correct proposition. How can it be said that a debt is extinguished when the question whether the sale will be confirmed or not is yet pending. I think, Sir, that so long as the sale has not been confirmed, the executing Court ought to stay its proceedings and ought to allow the debtor-agriculturist to have the benefit of the provisions of the Agricultural Debtors' Act.

(At this stage the member reached his time-limit.)

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** Can I have two minutes more, Sir.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Two minutes? All right.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** Three minutes, Sir.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, two minutes.

**Mr. MANMATHA NATH ROY:** Now, Sir, I shall make an earnest appeal to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of this department to bring about an amendment without delay so that there may not be any shadow of doubt that so long as the sale has not been confirmed, the debt has not been discharged, and that so long as the sale is not confirmed the

agriculturist will be in a position to have his remedy from the Conciliation Board. Sir, whether it is a bad drafting by the Legislature or it is an erroneous or incorrect decision of the High Court, the result has been the same and has led to very serious hardship to the debtor-agriculturists. As you have given me a very short time, I would only refer to one (though I can multiply many instances) very important matter which had been commented upon in the last issue of the "Calcutta Weekly Notes". The Calcutta Weekly Notes could not but be very pungent in its criticism. It describes the matter as "the unique sight of two appellate officers—the ordinary and the special—scrambling for jurisdiction." The Act has been so vaguely drafted that although there are two classes of appellate officers their respective jurisdictions have not been clearly defined. Before closing, I shall refer only to these remarks with which the "Calcutta Weekly Notes" concludes its criticism on the subject: "When the strain reaches such a degree of intensity that it can no longer be borne, the public themselves will rise against the Act and secure its repeal or the overthrow of its sponsors. Till then, we wish godspeed to the appellate officers who are serving the public cause by generating friction and preparing a case for an overhauling of the Act."

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No. 264, Maulvi Abdul Bari.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wish to have your ruling on this point. The members of the Coalition Party have received a Whip, signed "F. Huq", which, of course, stands for the Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Huq, to the effect that under the heads "Debt Conciliation" and "Co-operative" all the cut motions of their party members should be withdrawn after discussion within the House, and that if leave for withdrawal be objected to, the party should support the withdrawal, and all other cut motions should be opposed. In view of the fact that cut motions will be raised on the other side of the House, that is the side which supports the Government, only to be withdrawn, is it worth wasting the time of the House by allowing their cut motions to be raised and discussed; because there is a previous order that such cut motions must be withdrawn?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** After discussion, Sir. Don't waste the time on frivolous things.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHOUDHURY:** And all the discussions will be unreal.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** That point has already been answered by the Speaker.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Speaker has already given his ruling on that point. There cannot be anything more to discuss about that now. As regards the circulation of that Whip, it is purely a private and domestic matter with which we have nothing to do.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** I wish to submit that it is not a purely domestic matter. I have not—and many members on this side of the House have not, quite understood the Speaker's ruling which was a general ruling, but here we feel that as you are in the Chair we might have your ruling as to whether the members who have pledged themselves to withdraw their cut motions in advance, should be allowed to waste the time of the House.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** As regards that, the Speaker gave his ruling and this is a matter which, I think, you already understand: It is no use giving my ruling which might be quite contrary to the ruling of the Speaker, or in any way add any weight to that ruling. You know very well what that ruling is.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** On a point of order. May we know what interpretation the Whip of the European Group gave on that day when the Hon'ble Speaker gave his ruling? If we are not mistaken, on that occasion, in reply to a question following the ruling of the Speaker the Whip of that party declared that in view of the ruling of the Speaker, no further cut motions will be moved on behalf of their party, and as a result, it was arranged that some of their members would only speak generally on the general motion moved by the Minister. I do not understand how a new interpretation could be given to this now, and the Coalition Party members allowed to move and speak on their cut motions?

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Whatever the European Group said on that occasion they did it voluntarily and I cannot dictate to them.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** They said seriously as a result of the interpretation, Sir.

What we understood from the ruling of the Speaker was that no cut motions can be moved by the supporters of the Government. The Europeans also held that view. They are present. Mr. Millar, their Whip, is present. Let him be allowed to speak.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You know it very well that the Speaker made it clear that he cannot stop anybody from doing anything which is their legitimate due whether moving a cut motion or not, but it was understood that the supporters of the Government would not ordinarily

move their cut motions. That was generally understood. That was the convention, but the Speaker made it clear that he could not stop any one from speaking whether on a cut motion or not.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** The motion that stands in my name runs to this effect that the demand be reduced by Rs. 100 in order to discuss facility of the scheme without comparing scheme of establishing rural banks to help cultivators to obtain crops loans. At the very outset I would make it perfectly clear that I do not want to move the motion but I want to speak on the motion just to draw the attention of the Government to the defects that exist in the Act and to some of the grievances that the people have against the administration of the Act. (A VOICE FROM THE CONGRESS BENCHES: Satisfy your constituency.) My constituency will be satisfied and you will also be satisfied and if you will have the patience, please listen to me.

Now Sir, since the Agricultural Debtors Act was passed the Government had to admit that the overdues of the tenants and the cultivators was too much and that their shoulders were not broad enough to bear the debts that had accumulated, and by the establishment of the Debt Settlement Boards the Government is further committed to the fact that the debt of the debtors and of the tenants must be reduced to such an extent so that they may be free, absolutely free, of all debts and they may begin their lives afresh, but, Sir, so far as the Debt Settlement Boards are concerned whether these Debt Settlement Boards alone will serve the purpose for which these Boards have been established, namely, whether these Boards will be able to make the tenants of Bengal absolutely debt-free, whether these Boards will enable the tenants to live with happiness and to begin a fresh life without having any liabilities whatsoever or not.

Now, Sir, if we just compare this present Act to the Co-operative Movement Act, we shall find that the same difficulties which faced the working of the Co-operative Movement Act face the present Agricultural Debtors Act. Sir, I am not going to criticise the Act, but I want to offer some helpful suggestions to Government with the idea that Government will take them up in right earnest without any fear, or apprehension or dread. I submit, Sir, that Government must take bold steps and must pass legislation which will really be beneficial and helpful to the tenants at large. Though I am not moving this motion, Sir, I want to make it perfectly clear to Government that the suggestions that we have been giving must be acted upon, and we must give Government a definite time by which time these Acts may be brought into operation.

Now, Sir, you know very well that at the time when the Co-operative Movement was ushered in in this country, the local *mahajans* were

demanding high rates of interest—as much as 50 per cent.—and in order to give relief to the debtors the Co-operative Movement was inaugurated with the result that the rate of interest was reduced to 15 per cent. which still exists. Those circumstances have changed, Sir. At the time when the Co-operative Movement came into operation the condition of the cultivators was far better than what it is to-day. That was a time, Sir, when people could afford to pay interest at the rate of 15 per cent., but now it is practically impossible to bear interest even at the rate of 5 per cent. As I have already stated, Sir, the circumstances have changed, and this fact will have to be taken into consideration, and the law will have to be changed accordingly.

Now, Sir, it is very well known that the Co-operative Movement have reached a stage of coma. We do not want that this movement should die. On the contrary, we want to resuscitate it, and we shall have to devise ways and means as to how this movement can be kept alive. Sir, this Co-operative Movement has proved to be a terror to the people in view of the fact that the accumulation of arrears of debt is alarming to such an extent that it is almost impossible to pay it up even by the reduction of rent. Therefore it is necessary that the rate of interest should not only be reduced but that in places where it has gone up very high it should be written off. Now, Sir, even if it is written off, the question may naturally arise in the mind of Government as to how it will be possible for the Central Banks to pay their depositors. To that my reply is that Government must be prepared to advance money, if necessary, or to grant loans in order to give relief to these people. Government must be prepared to give long-term loans and, at the same time, in order to enable the people to tide over temporary difficulties they must be prepared to grant short-term loans at the time of the sowing season.

Now, Sir, when I was talking of the Agricultural Debtors Act I wanted to tell the Hon'ble Minister in charge that the Agricultural Debtors Act, as it at present, is of no use to the debtors. Of course, a Board after making a full and extensive enquiry into the debts of a debtor, may give him long instalments, say, up to 20 years. But this will not do, because Government will have to consider the case of a man who has a debt of Rs. 5,000 and has 5 bighas of land; it will certainly be impossible for such a man to clear his debt even if the period of repayment is extended to 40 years. Therefore what the Act should provide for and what Government must be prepared to do is that the debts of the debtors must be reduced to such an extent as would enable them to repay according to their means. If a man has 5 bighas of land, his debt must be reduced to Rs. 100 and not more than that. Unless you can do this, it will be impossible to give any relief to the tenants at large. That is one thing to which I would draw the attention of Government.

The second thing to which I would draw the attention of Government is this: that they should start banks in the muffasal for the purpose of granting loans to the tenants, and Government must be prepared to advance money to those banks. This is necessary because, Sir, at present there has been such a panic in the minds of the *mahajans* that they are not prepared to advance even a single pie to the tenants. If you do not do this, the result will be that the tenants will have no money, and if they have no money, they will not be in a position to purchase seeds, to weed their fields properly, and to purchase cattle when the purchase of cattle is necessary for the purpose of cultivation. These things will have to be taken into consideration, and if Government are really anxious to help the cultivators they must be prepared to advance loans to them.

Now, Sir, there are two sorts of loans—long-term and short-term. At the time of the harvesting season, short-term loans must be granted to the cultivators, and these must be realised just after the harvest is over, *i.e.*, when the paddy or other crops are gathered. I can assure the Government, Sir, that the people will not hesitate to repay the short-term loans within three to five months of the harvesting, because then money will be handy to the cultivators.

So far as the long-term loans are concerned, they are necessary in order to make these people pay up all their dues—be it to the Central Banks, or to the Rural Societies or to private *mahajans*. Moreover, these long-term loans will be necessary for the purpose of purchase of cattle when they die just at the time of sowing.

Then, Sir, with regard to the Co-operative Movement and the realisation of arrears, I can refer you to the scheme that obtains in Burma. There, Sir, the Co-operative Movement reached such a stage that it was at one time thought by Government that the movement would die a natural death. However, an officer could be found who took up the cause of this movement with such earnestness that the result was that in course of two years the whole movement was resuscitated.

(At this stage the member reached his time-limit but was allowed to continue for one minute more.)

Sir, I shall try to be very brief. In those cases where Government find that it will be difficult to realise their dues except at the cost of ruining the cultivator they will have to make arrangements for payment in kind. For example, Government may have the land of the debtor surrendered to themselves, and then they can lease it out to the same person in order to enable him to pay up the instalments. By that course, Sir, Government will be able to realise their dues and, at the same time to prevent any hardship being caused to the cultivators. It will also be their duty to see to it that marketing facilities are given

) these people, as without proper marketing facilities it will be impossible for Government to expect that these people will be in a position ) pay up their dues, as for example——

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed is seat.)

The House was then adjourned for 15 minutes.

(*After adjournment.*)

**Mr. JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR:** I beg to move that the demand nder "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation" be reduced y Rs. 100 to discuss the necessity of amendment of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, 1935, making provisions for retrospective effect rom 1930 and to include the debts of the Co-operative Societies and ll other Scheduled Banks under the definition "debt".

সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমার এই cut motion এর উদ্দেশ্য গত ১৯৩০ সন হ'তে পৃথিবী-ব্যাপি যে মন্দা চ'লে আসছে তদদরুণ এবং তারপরে ১৯৩৫ সনে যখন Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act পাশ হয় তখন থেকে গভর্ণমেণ্টের কর্ম্মচারীদের বিশেষ কোরে Executive Officers দের ও মুনসেফি আদালতের বিরুদ্ধভাব পোষনের ফলে চাষী খাতকদের যে সকল স্থাবর সম্পত্তি, আইন ঘটিত ত্রুটি বিচ্যুতির দরুণ বা অন্যান্য কারণে, নিলাম হয়েছে তাহা ফেরত পাবার জন্য ১৯৩৫ সনের Act এ retrospective effect দিয়া চাষীগণের উপকার করা। সুতরাং যাতে তারা তাদের দেয্য দেনা পরিশোধ কোরতে পারে এবং তাদের নীলামী সম্পত্তি ফেরত পাইতে পারে সেইজন্য ১৯৩৫ সনের Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act সংশোধন ক'রে এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে চাষী খাতকদের অর্থাৎ কৃষকদের যে সকল দেনা Co-operative Bank এ অথবা অন্যান্য Bank এ আছে সেগুলিও এই আইনের অন্তর্ভুক্ত যে "Debt" সে "Debt" শব্দের মধ্যে এনে দেওয়া উচিত। আমি এ সম্পর্কে যে সংশোধন বিল দিয়াছিলাম গত Session এ তাহা গত নবেম্বর মাসে ১৮ই তারিখে কলিকাতার গেজেটে প্রকাশিত হয়েছিল; তৎপ্রতি আপনাদের মনোযোগ আকর্ষণ কোরছি। আমি আমার সেই বিলএ উদ্দেশ্য ও যুক্তির মধ্যে বোলেছিলাম—

"* * Besides the previous usual exorbitant high rate of interest supported by the then existing law, the sudden, unexpected and unusual fall in the price of agricultural crops upon which the agriculturists of Bengal mainly depend, has made their pecuniary condition awfully miserable, owing to the world-wide economic depression prevailing since the year 1930 and as a result of which the paying capacity of the agriculturists has been totally lost. On account of this acute economic distress prevailing all over Bengal especially affecting the jute-growing districts, most of the agriculturists had to be struggling for only meeting the expenses of bare daily necessaries of life to maintain their families." In the circumstances, it cannot be expected of all of them that they should have duly made payment of that dues

to their creditors and in that case they cannot be held responsible for their unwillingness to do so. The Government of Bengal also in realising the serious nature of the distress at that critical time came forward to save the producers of national wealth and helped them with supplying agricultural loans in the year 1932. And in the meantime during the last few years of economic depression since 1930 landed properties of many agricultural debtors have been sold and purchased at the sale by many decree-holders in execution of their decrees in civil courts for such a small amount which is very trifling in consideration of the real value of those properties in normal time. The poor debtors had to allow it as there was then no help. While decree-holders have gone a step further. Taking undue advantage of the helplessness of the judgment-debtors and knowing full well their incapacity to pay, most of the creditors have utilised this opportunity in favour of their selfish ends, in taking delivery of symbolical possession of their landed properties including the homesteads of many debtors through the help of the civil courts, though of course, most of these cases have failed in actually satisfying their claims as the lands concerned are practically in the direct possession of debtors as it was before and over which disputes still exist. It should not be understood that the debtors are to be given indulgence to deprive the creditors of their legitimate claims in no case whatsoever which are reasonable and just. But it cannot be supported that this sort of debt-dispute over the possession of immovable properties of debtors including their homesteads should be allowed to continue further to embitter the feelings between the creditors and debtors and thereby threaten to disturb the peace of rural Bengal. This aspect of the present debt-problem should not be neglected for the vital interests of poor agricultural debtors unless most of them are intended to be turned into day-labourers and driven out from their ancestral homes to the mercy of God. Debt Settlement Boards worth existence to settle amicably these sorts of disputes over possession of lands arising out of debts of the nature.

In order that the Debt Settlement Boards may take up these disputed cases for amicable settlement between the parties concerned, provision should be made in the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, 1935, to give a retrospective effect to the Act from 1930.

As regards the next point "most of the agricultural debtors are at present also heavily indebted to Co-operative Societies and other Banks. It will practically serve no useful purpose by only settling and for that purpose scaling down——

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Mr. Speaker, it appears that he is well acquainted with English language. Is he entitled to speak in Bengali?

**Mr. JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR:** I am only reading. .....scaling down the liabilities to individual creditors if no favourable settlement and adjustment is possible with regard to their other liabilities to Co-operative Societies and Banks. For this reason the definition of "debt" should also include such liabilities and the Act should be so amended.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** On a point of order, Sir. Is he entitled to speak in Bengali?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am not prepared to give a hypothetical ruling now.

**Mr. JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR:** সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমি বোলেছি যে, এ আইন পাশ হবার পূর্বে আর্থিক মন্দার দরুণ যে সব চাষী খাতকের জোৎ জমি ১৯৩০ ইং সন হইতে সামান্য সামান্য দেনার দাবী হইতে নীলাম হয়ে Symbolical possession দেওয়া হয়েছে, সেই সকল যাতে ফিরিয়ে পেতে পারে, এবং এ আইন পাশ হবার পরেও আইনটী কার্য্যকরী হবার পূর্ব পর্য্যন্ত এবং সালিশী বোর্ড স্থাপনের পরেও Civil court কর্ম্মচারী ও Government Executive official দের বিরুদ্ধভাব পোষণের দরুণ বা আইনের খুঁটি নাটির দরুণ যে সকল মূল্যবান সম্পত্তি সামান্য দাবী হইতে নীলামে হস্তান্তরিত হয়েছে সেগুলি চাষী প্রজারা যাতে ফেরত পেতে পারে, সেইভাবে আইনের retrospective effect দিয়া সংশোধন হওয়া দরকার। গভর্ণমেণ্টের [illegible] শৈথিল্য ও বিরুদ্ধভাব অবলম্বনের দরুণ আইনের যে বাধা ঘটছে এবং চাষী খাতকের অনেক স্থলে যে সর্বনাশ হইয়াছে সে সম্বন্ধে বিস্তর উদাহরণ দিতে পারি, জনসাধারণের স্বার্থের আমি মনে করি এই সকল প্রতিকার ব্যাপারে গভর্ণমেণ্টের একটা গুরুতর দায়িত্ব আছে। আমি এই আইন পাশ হবার পর হতেই একটা সালিশী বোর্ডের chairman আছি এবং তৎপূর্বেও ছিলাম। এই আইন ১৯৩৫ সালে পাশ হয় এবং ১৯৩৫ পূর্বে বাংলাদেশের মধ্যে সর্বপ্রথম আমাদের চাঁদপুরই এই সালিশী ব্যাপারে অগ্রণী হইয়াছিল। ১৪টা Union Board এর প্রথম বৈঠক নির্দ্দিষ্ট ব্যাপারে স্থানীয় জেলা ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটের উপর আইনত যে ক্ষমতা আছে, প্রয়োগ ব্যাপারে সে শৈথিল্য হইয়াছিল—

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. W. C. WORDSWORTH:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I join in no accusation of apathy against the Minister in charge of this department, for I know something of the work that these problems have thrown upon him. I know also that soon he will put this House to hard labour to help him in passing a Bill he has in preparation for the general improvement of his department. When the Bill for Debt Conciliation was passed in this House this group put forward a strong representation that the work should be done quickly, that debt conciliation should be regarded as a surgical operation rather than a long process of medical treatment. We failed. Our fear was that the Act if delayed in its operation might upset the organization of credit in rural areas. It is too soon to say whether that will be so. But certainly the information comes to us from certain districts that

already the working of rural credit has been greatly interfered with, and that a law intended to help the peasant by relieving him of part of the debt he has already contracted is preventing him from getting any new loans at all. In the circumstances of our agriculture in Bengal the peasant must have resources to which he may turn between harvest and harvest, and although we hope that one day co-operative credit will do all that is necessary it would be folly to pretend that it has already put the ordinary money-lender out of business. The operation of this measure in rural areas therefore must be so conducted that the men who has money to lend the peasant does not refuse to lend it or is made unable to lend it. I am told that this is what is happening in some places.

We all have sympathy for the peasant, and we know how his difficulties have been terribly increased because while his debts have increased his need of credit also has increased while his conditions have made him less credit-worthy. I do not know how far the Minister and his department have power in their hands to direct and control the operation of these debt conciliation boards. Nor, as I say, do I know how far it is true that some of them are operating badly. I am told that in some cases when a decree is given, what it means is that what is left to be paid to the creditor is ordered to be paid in so many instalments over so many years that he may well be dead of old age before he gets his money back unless he has earlier put an end to his own life in misery and despair. We all agree that the peasant needs sympathy and help, but a very important part of that help is the availability of credit; to be sympathetic in feeling yet leave him little opportunity of getting the loans he needs for his ordinary purposes will not be a service to him or the province. That, Sir, is the only point I wish to touch on now.

**Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL:** Sir, I rise to speak a few words on the Debt Settlement Boards. Firstly, I would try to show how far the poor agriculturists have been benefited by the passing of the Debtors' Act and secondly, I will attempt to place some of the working difficulties of the Act before the House. The Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act was passed in 1935. The shrewd and clever creditors getting scent of this Bill began to institute as many suits and to start execution thereof as their purses allowed. But even in the face of these hard and stern facts, leading to the indiscriminate auction sale of the movable and immovable properties of the poor agriculturist debtor, rules for the enforcement of the Act were not framed and published earlier than 8 or 10 months after the Act was passed and even after that only some districts boards, all ordinary, were established in some parts of Bengal leaving the poor agriculturists of other parts at the tender mercy of the creditors who took full advantage of the

situation. With the establishment of debt settlement boards the question arose as to up to what stage in the execution proceedings the debts subsisted and up to what stage these debts can be settled by the debt settlement boards and the officers of the Debt Conciliation Department gave instructions that debt subsisted till the sale was confirmed either after 30 days when no sale to set aside a case is filed, or after a sale-set-aside case is finally disposed of. So on the strength of this instruction many debtors filed applications with debt settlement boards after sale without trying to save their properties by other means, and in those areas where debt settlement boards were not established they filed sale-set-aside cases on the expectation that boards may be established in those *elakas* during the pendency of these cases, and thereby they will be able to secure the benefit of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act and actually many debtors got some relief thereby, but the case reported in 41 C.W.N. 1307 came to them as a bomb-shell. Consequently all the sales which were stayed by the Debt Settlement Boards under section 34 of the Act were confirmed on the application of the creditors to the utter detriment of these poor debtors. So legislation is necessary at least to protect the properties of these poor people. Another great handicap is the assessment of the court-fee. This is being done by rules framed under this Act. In addition to a court-fee of annas twelve with which an application is filed, a court-fee of two per cent. on the debts determined under section 18 of the Act is to be paid, equally by the debtors and creditors. The determined debts are, excepting loans on usufructuary mortgages, double the principal, and the creditors' quota of court-fees are never paid by them leaving the entire burden on the poor debtors, which in many cases is not an insignificant amount; and to add to his difficulties some district officers and subdivisional officers instruct the boards not to settle the debts of those who do not agree to pay in cash the dues of first instalments along with his court-fees. Due to the rigorous enforcement of these rules and circulars the applications of the many poor debtors have been and are being dismissed for non-payment of court-fees, and cash payments along with the court-fees. Instead of diminishing the rigour of these rules now it has been ordered that unless the requisite court-fees are paid immediately after the determination of debts the boards shall not proceed to settle the debts of the applicants. Owing to this rule the debtors cannot and in some cases do not file their applications because most of the boards cannot then enforce the attendance of and none has got absolute power for settlement. This rule should immediately be changed and the court-fee should be paid after settlement and on the settled debts. Owing to the absence of power under section 9 (*2*) in the ordinary boards they cannot entertain the applications of joint debtors unless all of them join, nor can they grant any relief to the extent of his liability. As most of the debts are ancestral there is jointness everywhere. And

investing of this power is an urgent necessity. There is another difficulty—in many boards taking advantage of the illiteracy of the debtors sureties have been entered in the bonds as joint debtors. Without powers under section 13 (*2*) the boards' jurisdiction ceases as soon as the creditors elect not to submit a statement before it. So investing of this power is necessary. Selected ordinary district boards should also be invested with power under section 19 (*1*) (*b*) without which settlement in many cases is impossible. As all orders under this section are appealable before a Senior Munsif the apprehension of miscarriage of justice is not much. There is another point to which I wish to draw the attention of the House; under sub-clause (*b*) (*i*) of section 8 (*2*) the scheduled banks have been exempted from the operation of the Act. The Scheduled Banks are extending this protection to many loan officer and in this connection I may point that the case of the Comilla Union Bank.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, I have listened with very great attention to the debate over this demand of mine. To start with my friend Mr. Manmatha Nath Roy, for whom I have very great respect, was perhaps labouring under a confusion of thought. As Chairman of the district board the only thing he could think of was the union board and its election. So far as the members of these Debt Conciliation Boards are concerned, I can at once assure him that there is no question of election whether by ballot or otherwise. They are appointed by the local Government, under section 3 of the Debtors' Act. There is no apprehension of the kind he mentioned in connection with the union boards, as members are appointed to these Debt Conciliation Boards by Government. With regard to the main thing that he has said, namely, as to the point of time till when the debt exists, there, Sir, we are in the greatest difficulty. Personally speaking, I am inclined to agree with mim that the debt should not be said to be extinguished at the time when the sale takes place. But there the Hon'ble High Court has put us to a difficulty. A Bench of two Hon'ble Judges of the High Court held that with sale the debt is not extinguished and the debt continues to exist up to the point of time till the sale is confirmed. Another Bench of two Hon'ble Judges with the Hon'ble the Acting Chief Justice held that there was no debt after the sale took place. In that state of the interpretation of the law, I do not know what real action we could take under the circumstances. As I have stated in my opening speech, we have really taken the matter in hand and this will be one of the points for consideration when we come to amend this Act. As I have already indicated, that this point, namely, the question of the definition of debt and debtor will be also

one of the points to be taken into consideration; and I hope that so far as that matter is concerned, my hon'ble friend Mr. Manmatha Nath Roy will now be satisfied that we share his view and will certainly try to see how far we can go in remedying this evil that has been introduced not by any provision so far as the Act is concerned, but by an interpretation of the statute by the Hon'ble High Court. I need not go into the question as to what the Calcutta Weekly Notes have or have not said. Everybody has his opinion and certainly I do not grudge the C. W. N. Editor having his.

So far as the appellate officers are concerned, there are distinct provisions that there is one class of appellate officers for special boards and there is a different class of appellate officers for ordinary boards. Therefore, there should not be any question of grumbling our jurisdiction in this matter.

With regard to the suggestion made by my hon'ble friend Mr. Abdul Bari, I can at once tell him without meaning the least disrespect to him that he was talking of the co-operative movement and not of debt conciliation. I share his views that some attempts should be made to find credit when the rural agriculturists are in real need of money. What we have done, I shall certainly place before the House when I put my next demand. There I shall indicate to the hon'ble members of this House the steps we have taken in that direction. That will be through the operation of the co-operative department of the administration.

Now, Sir, with regard to the question of marketing facilities that he has mentioned, I think my hon'ble colleague, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, has a scheme in view, and I am sure that that suggestion of his will also be carefully gone into. That, I submit, also meets some of the points raised by my hon'ble friend Mr. Israil. With regard to the particular question that has been raised by my friend Mr. Jonab Ali Majumdar along with my friend Mr. Israil for the inclusion of the Scheduled Banks within the operation of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, I join issue with them. I was trying so long to find out as to whether any Scheduled Banks had any transactions with the agriculturists. Mr. Majumdar has referred to one Scheduled Bank, the Comilla Union Bank, and perhaps there is another, the Comilla Banking Corporation, which comes within the schedule of the Reserve Bank of India. All these Banks do not function in rural areas, they function only in towns, and we put this specific questions to one of the Banks to let us know as to whether or not it has any client from the rural areas. I am sorry to say, it was not good enough to reply to our query. But I ascertained from a distinguished member of the other House coming from this area that these Banks had no concern whatsoever with rural areas. I hope, you remember the debate that was raised by my friend Mr. Sarat Kumar Roy, then

a member of the old Bengal Legislative Council, which body passed this measure, by introducing an amendment to clause 2 whereby he wanted to suggest that this also should be included within the operation of this Act. My hon'ble colleague, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, who was the Member-in-charge of this Department, stated that this Act would only operate in rural areas where the Scheduled Banks had practically no concern, and that therefore it was not necessary to include them. In that view of the matter, Mr. Sarat Kumar Roy was good enough to withdraw his amendment. I say again with all respect for them that this is not a practical proposition for us to consider now.

With regard to the suggestion regarding the finding of rural credit made by my very esteemed friend Mr. Wordsworth from whom I had my elementary lessons in Economics as a student of his in 1908 in the Presidency College, and whose opinion carries very great weight with me, I shall certainly be able to give some explanation to the House when I present my next demand.

I trust, that perhaps this finishes all the suggestions that have been made excepting one or two made by my friend Mr. Israil for vesting these Boards with all the powers that were necessary. I have assured him just in the beginning of my speech that we have decided and have taken action from that point of view to vest all the Boards with powers under section 9(*2*) and section 13(*2*), but as regards powers under section 19(*1*)(*b*), that raises a very difficult question. And one has got to examine that question very carefully before vesting the Boards with such powers. But I can assure him that whenever a demand or necessity is felt, we shall certainly be too glad to examine the question and invest the Boards with the necessary powers. As to the question of court-fees, raised by Mr. Israil, I submit, Sir, that he knows very well that 2 per cent. is certainly very small in comparison with 11¼ per cent. which everybody is compelled to pay if he is dragged to a civil court. The realisations show that we are working at a very great deficit. I am sorry, I have not got the figures with me, but I shall certainly be very glad to show him that in point of fact there is absolutely no complaint under this head. I can give him this assurance further that if any difficulty is felt I shall certainly be glad to examine the question once again.

In view of what I have said, I hope that my hon'ble friends Mr. Roy and Mr. Majumdar would be glad to withdraw their motions, otherwise I oppose both of them.

The motion of Mr. Manmatha Nath Roy that the demand under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Jonab Ali Majumdar that the demand under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary Mullick that the demand of Rs. 24,45,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation" was then put and agreed to.

## 42—Co-operation.

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 14,63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation."

Sir, in presenting this demand to the House I may just make a few remarks at this stage. This is the second time that the Co-operative Department is going to receive the suggestions of the elected representatives of the people with a view to make it really useful for those for whom it is meant.

It is not necessary for me to explain the several items that go to constitute this demand. But, Sir, I think there has been some amount of misgiving with respect to at least one or two matters which I should try and clear up. I remember the criticisms that were levelled against the Department at the time of the last Budget in September 1937 when some of our hon'ble friends even went the length of expressing the view that the Co-operative Department had not practically done anything in this country to be of real service to the rural masses. Sir, I made my submission on that occasion, and I should not repeat what I then said. But regard being had to the number of motions that have been tabled now, it seems that it is necessary that I should make a few observations with the hope of removing even to some extent the amount of misgiving that is still lingering.

It is no doubt true, Sir, that the movement was based first on the Act of 1904 and next on the Act of 1912. To be frank, to start with, this was in the nature of credit and at a time when agriculturists had to borrow at the rate of 60 to 70 per cent. of interest. It was brought down to about 15 per cent. To that extent it could be said that the movement did really serve the people.

Sir, I can really appreciate the anxiety of my hon'ble friends that this Department being the true nation building department might be so utilized as it may be of real service to the rural masses of this Province. Sir, on the last occasion I said that with the idea of rehabilitating the movement I would take immediate steps with regard to several matters. One of those was to separate Audit from Supervision, and we have got a scheme already, and as soon as we have got the trained staff, this will be put in actual shape. Next I said that the Co-operative Societies Act should be amended. We have also taken that up; and to show that we are not lagging behind I had the honour

of calling a conference of members of both the Houses who have taken an interest in this movement as also one invited gentleman not belonging to the Legislature, but who had taken an interest in this subject. We sat for two days, and they gave us their valuable suggestions which are also being examined with the object of giving them a proper shape.

Sir, another object I have in view is to see that the supervising staff attached to the Central Banks be placed on a common service basis, and although they will be attached to their respective Central Banks who will be their masters, they will also be subjected to the control and supervision of the Department, so that they will be liable to transfer from place to place, and will be able to work on a more secure basis. I have thought of taking this course for the simple reason that in the course of my recent tours through the various Districts where I came into contact with the directorate of various Central Banks. They suggested that this should be done so that when the service would be secure we would be able to attract middle class educated young men to this service and with that security of service they will be able to work more cheerfully and with a greater degree of responsibility.

Sir, I think I should take this opportunity also to give in short the policy that we desire to follow in this department. Without going into details, I will at once state that the policy of Co-operative Department is going to be one of consolidation and expansion of the movement by introducing various measures of relief and improvement. Amongst others we have thought that relief should be given to the Central Banks, Primary Societies and individual members by reduction in their borrowing rate of interest.

In the second place, an attempt is being made to scale down and remit the dues of the members of the Primary Societies particularly in respect of their outstanding overdue interest. In this respect, it has been decided in consultation with the Central Banks that the memers of the village societies should pay in 5 to 10 years annual instalments only the Central Bank's portion of overdue interest from societies which is generally 50 per cent. or even less of the arrear interest due by members to their societes. In some instances, which are not few, the Central Bank has agreed to remit the entire arrear interest provided one year's current interest is regularly and fully paid by the members of societies. In a few instances the members of societies have been permitted to pay only principal dues by instalment and the payment of interest, both arrear and current, has altogether been suspended. In the third place——

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRAVORTY** (interrupted the Hon'ble Minister asking how long he would take to read his typed speech).

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I would only say that in future—it is all right now —in future I will see that in case a Minister has to explain a policy,

it would be much preferable if it is done by a White Paper and circulated beforehand as far as possible so that members may take the advantage of going through it. The Nawab Bahadur enquired from me, and I asked him to follow that practice, and he has been good enough to do so. If the House agrees to it, it would be advantageous to do so in view of the shortness of the time of the House.

**Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** May not the written report be taken as read?

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, I shall be very short.

In the third place, steps have already been taken to examine the position of the individual loans with a view to ascertaining the maximum relief that could be given to the borrowing members in repayment of their dues. It is designed also to push on with the formation of Land Mortgage Banks for advancing long term loans to the agriculturists primarily for liquidation of their prior debts and improvement of lands. Hon'ble members of this House know that there are five Land Mortgage Banks now working in five divisions on an experimental basis. Their membership is over 1,500 and the capital invested in these banks is about Rs. 3 lakhs.

In the next place, it is designed to introduce a rural reconstruction scheme on co-operative basis for increase of the income of the members and improvement of village sanitation and education. Some of these societies have successfully taken up departmental programme by introducing subsidiary occupations such as vegetable gardening, poultry farming, handloom weaving, etc., and measures for spread of primary education and improvement of village health and sanitation.

It is then intended to amend the Co-operative Societies' Bill which I have mentioned in the beginning. These are some of our activities which we have already undertaken or desire to undertake very shortly. Along with these we have already had a large number of irrigation societies, and in this connection I should thank my friend Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal for giving us advice the other day that the departments of Co-operation, Agriculture and Irrigation should work in co-ordination with one another. I can only assure him that we have already taken steps in that direction.

Sir, before we expand our Department I think it is desirable that the old order of things should be placed on a sound basis.

With these words, Sir, I make a formal demand for this sum of Rs. 14,63,000.

**Mr. SATYA PRIYA BANERJI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the cut motion that stands in my name, viz., that the demand of grant

for a sum of Rs. 14,63,000 under the head "42—Co-operation" be reduced by Rs. 100. My object in doing so, is to raise a discussion about the policy of the Government regarding the movement of co-operation. I have listened with interest and attention to the speech of the Hon'ble the Minister in charge of Co-operation but I am constrained to say that no light has been thrown on the dark and obscure corners of his Department nor any comprehensive scheme as to how the Co-operative movement is to be reorganised and well conducted in future has been vouchsafed to us for our consideration.

Sir, I shall not take up the time of the House by describing the revolutionary aspect of the co-operative movement, an aspect on which Lenin, the greatest revolutionary, has laid the greatest stress in the international socialist congresses from time to time, nor shall I take this opportunity of relating the phenomenal growth of the consumers' co-operative movement of England and other countries, a movement which the Co-operative Department of the Government might do well to emulate. I wish I could deal with them exhaustively but the time at my disposal is very short and therefore I am forced to confine myself to the Co-operative Movement in India with special reference to Bengal.

Sir, the latest figures available betray a dismal and gloomy picture of the co-operative movement. They tell a very sad tale. As a result of 35 years of official effort, only a microscopic minority of the population, namely, about 4 per cent., has been touched and an insignificant portion of the finance required for agriculture, viz., about 5 per cent. has been provided for by the Co-operative Credit Agency. The movement which started full of promise could not on account of official control, grow from more to more; on the contrary, it has been progressively deteriorating, and at the present moment, it has come to such a stage that it can be fairly described to be in a state of informal liquidation (hear, hear from the Congress Benches.)

Sir, the Co-operative Credit Movement owes its origin to the belief that the natural development of the progress of the movement will be the eradication of the evil of usury, and the lightening of the burden of rural indebtedness through the agency of the Co-operative Credit Societies. What do we really find? We find that the movement has not been able to materially improve the condition of the agriculturists—on the contrary, debts have increased to such an alarming extent that members are threatened with ruin, the assets of the Banks have become frozen, they are unable even to finance the societies any further and the whole movement has come almost to a dead stop. The fundamental mistake, Sir, committed by the Indian Co-operative Movement started under official auspices, was the failure to recognise the need and importance of the preliminary liquidation of the existing debts and the incapacity to realise that the villagers' life must be tackled as a whole

and should not be split up into water-tight compartments, that the Co-operative Movement must give up dealing with members piecemeal and must cater for all their wants, in other words, they must be all-comprehensive. The need for such preliminary liquidation was recognised by the Government of India in the following terms as far back as 1882:—

"Improvidence of cultivators and uncertainty of seasons are elements which are liable to interfere with a Bank's success and these difficulties might be met by prudent management; yet the Bank could not hope to succeed unless it could start in a field, where the agricultural classes were unencumbered with debt or were enabled to liquidate their existing debts on reasonable terms."

The desirability of such preliminary liquidation was also emphasized by the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale in 1904 during the debate on the Co-operative Credit Societies Bill of the same year when he said: "The Bill aims at organising on a co-operative basis the credit of the agricultural classes but such an organisation if it is to be successful, must be preceded by a liquidation of existing usurious debts—such liquidation was carried out in Germany and elsewhere through the agency of special Banks, and the ground was cleared for the operation of the new banking organisations". And the need, Sir, to embrace the whole of the life of the agriculturist was emphasised by Sir Frederick Nicholson in his classic report on co-operation of 1895, and the recent Bulletin of 1937 of the Reserve Bank of India quotes *in extenso* from this report and comes to the conclusion that if the Co-operative Movement is to successfully tackle the problem of indebtedness, it has to take in hand every aspect of the life of the agriculturist and to remove all causes which lead to deficit economy, and suggests the formation of multi-purpose Co-operative Societies which will take up the whole of the village life within its ambit, a suggestion which the Hon'ble Minister in charge will do well to bear in mind in framing a scheme for reorganization of the co-operative movement.

Sir, the co-operative movement is a people's movement and as such, it ought to have been a movement of the people, by the people and for the people but Sir, in this land of many regrets and still more surprises, the movement has been from the beginning an official one, the independent non-official section of the public having no voice in its direction, and the result has been, as has been said by the managing Governor of the Imperial Bank of India, that the business of the co-operative movement cannot, as a whole, be considered to have been conducted in a satisfactory manner, that the fundamental principle of true co-operation is lacking, overdues are highly excessive, audit is defective and control inefficient—not only that, there have been too many cases of defalcation, corruption and mismanagement in connection with the

co-operative Societies ("shame," "shame" from the Congress Benches). The Act II of 1912 and the rules under section 43 of the said Act virtually empower the Registrar to deal with the movement in any way he likes and not being able to put up with the dictatorial attitude of the Registrar, some of the best men in the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society, the only non-official organization in the movement, have left it in disgust. Let me cite some instances, among many, of mismanagement, defalcation and corruption:

The jute sale societies—as a result of the failure, due to mismanagement and other causes, of this society of which the Registrar was the Chairman, we have to pay annually Rs. 2 lakhs, a sum which could have been otherwise better utilised. Will the Hon'ble Minister enquire into the details which led to the failure of this Society, a Society on the successful operation of which, the economic position of the jute growers of this province would have greatly improved, and will he also enquire into the part the vested interests of the Jute Mills of Dundee and Bengal played in sabotaging this Society?

(At this stage the member reached his time-limit.)

Sir, may I have 2 or 3 minutes more to finish my speech?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes, but I hope that you will be very brief. I want to close the debate at 7-55 p.m. and then call upon the Hon'ble Minister to reply. Further, we shall have to set apart some time for a division, if any.

**Mr. SATYA PRIYA BANERJI:** Yes, Sir, I shall try to be brief.

Then, Sir, there is the Dacca Co-operative Industrial Union, a record mismanagement was responsible for its failure. The Hooghly-Serampore defalcation case; the Ghatal defalcation case; the Nadia defalcation case; the Comilla defalcation case; the Bengal Co-operative Officers' Society, which carries on its business under the very nose of the Registrar in the Writers Buildings, may I ask the Hon'ble Minister in charge to enquire into the state of affairs of this Society and is it a fact that some responsible officers of this Department have been suspended? Then there is the case of the South Calcutta Credit Society—the highest officers are responsible for its present deplorable condition, as they and their relations and friends took *benami* loans (shame, shame); and then I shall cite the Improvement Trust Co-operative Society Defalcation Case.

I could have multiplied instances, but the time at my disposal will not allow me to do so, and I would wait for a statement of the Hon'ble Minister as to what steps have been taken in the matter of enquiry urged during the debate under this head on the occasion of the previous budget demand and what steps does he intend taking now in the face of these very serious and ugly disclosures?

We, on this side of the House, have been accused by the members of the Treasury Bench of destructive criticism and of not helping them with constructive suggestions. I will presently disarm that criticism by offering the following suggestions for the consideration of the Hon'ble Minister.

A new Act to foster the growth of the movement so that the whole of the village life might be embraced is to be placed on the Statute Book, and in order to formulate the basis of such an Act a committee should be formed to go into the whole problem and to report on the same at a very early date. The new Act should progressively diminish official control of the movement with a view to ultimately divest it of official control altogether and also fix a time-limit for the purpose.

Strong independent non-official advisory committee is to be set up to advise the Registrar who will see that this advice is carried out—this committee to meet once a month.

Auditing is to be entirely separate from organisation—provisionally it can be placed under the Accountant-General, Bengal. (Hear, hear.)

Long-term debentures are to be issued by Government at 3 per cent. per annum on account of the frozen capital to be realised from the debtors after ascertaining and writing off the bad debts.

Short-term debentures to convert the present deposits into debentures, Government guaranteeing 3 per cent. interest is also to be issued.

Side by side with the Board of Management of every Central Bank there should be a council of supervision, as a check to the mismanagement by the Board. This system existed in Germany before the advent of Herr Hitler.

And last but not the least, the formulation of an intensive scheme to educate the villagers on the principles of co-operation should be immediately taken in hand, so that in near future every villager becomes a member of the multi-purpose co-operative society on the portals of which will be inscribed:—

"সকলের তরে সকলে আমরা
প্রত্যেকে আমরা পরের তরে।"

**Mr. RAMIZUDDIN AHMED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 14,63,000 for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation" be reduced by Rs. 100 (Reduction of rate of interest of rural co-operative societies).

Sir, I do not like to inflict a long speech on this House in support of my motion, because I know that it will be a waste of time and energy and a cry in the wilderness on my part to attempt to do so. I know, Sir, that the present Ministry will not pay any heed to any suggestion of mine for ameliorating the condition of the people.

Whenever we approached the Ministry in connection with any matter which affects the rural masses, particularly the poorer classes, the response we got from them was always to this effect "Impossible" or "Impracticable". I know, Sir, that the same sort of reply will be given to-day also, because I have no doubt in my mind that the present Ministry will not do anything to improve the conditions of the masses. The only thing, Sir. that the Ministry will do, as the Minister of this Department has done and is doing, is to create some posts and send some of their men to foreign countries at Government expense. Of course, I admit that the creation of some posts serves some purpose of the present Ministry and of certain members of the Coalition Party.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order, Maulvi Saheb. There should be no reflection cast on any member or members of this House.

**Mr. RAMIZUDDIN AHMED:** All right, Sir.

Now, coming to my motion, I shall say a few words. The co-operative movement was started, Sir, to relieve the teeming millions of Bengal of their indebtedness and to improve the condition of the masses, but nothing has been done so far in this direction, and the movement has proved to be a complete failure.

**Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD:** A constructive suggestion please.

**Mr. RAMIZUDDIN AHMED:** I don't like to be interrupted in this way.

I do not like to say much as to who is responsible for this failure, but I cannot but say that this Department is mostly responsible for this deplorable state of affairs. The co-operative credit system was meant for giving the poor peasants a small capital that would help them to look after their land and also to maintain themselves and their family from one harvesting season to another, until they can sell their lands and meet their liabliities. But far from implementing this object, the Co-operative Department has invested so much money on——

(At this stage the member having reached his time-limit resumed his seat).

**Babu PATIRAM ROY:**

মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমার নামে যে cut motion আছে সেটা আমি move কোরতে চাই না সে সম্বন্ধে আমি সাধারণভাবে কিছু আলোচনা কোরতে চাই। বর্তমানে বাংলাদেশে পল্লীর কৃষি, স্বাস্থ্য, শিক্ষা, শিল্প, প্রভৃতি বিষয়ের উন্নতি না কোরলে পল্লীর অস্তিত্ব

থাকবে না। তবে এই সব কাজ সমবেতভাবে না কোরলে হওয়ার সম্ভাবনা নাই। সমবেতভাবে পল্লীর কাজ কোরতে হ'লে আমাদের গভর্ণমেণ্টের সমবায় বিভাগের সাহায্যের একান্ত আবশ্যক। কিন্তু বর্ত্তমান সময়ে এই সমবায় বিভাগের দ্বারা যে কাজ হচ্ছে, তাতে দেখা যায়, বাংলাদেশে ৮০ হাজার গ্রামের মধ্যে প্রায় কুড়ি হাজার সমিতি আছে। সেগুলি হচ্ছে Credit Society, অর্থাৎ এই সমবায় সমিতিগুলির কাজ দেখে মনে হয় বর্ত্তমানে মহাজনগিরি করা ছাড়া আর কিছু এদের করবার নাই। এই যে সমিতি, এরা টাকা কর্জ্জ দিয়ে সুদ এবং আসল টাকা আদায় করে। তা'ছাড়া এই যে সব সমিতি এদের মধ্যে সমবায় অর্থাৎ সমবেতভাবে কাজ করা বা সমবায় নীতি অবলম্বন করার দৃষ্টান্ত দেখাই যায় না। সেই জন্য এদের নাম হওয়া উচিত শুধু ঋণ-দান সমিতি, এদের আর সমবায় সমিতি বলা যায় না। অথচ এই সমবায় বিভাগকে যদি ভালোভাবে কাজে লাগানো যায় তাহলে বাংলার দুস্থ পল্লীর— বাংলার কৃষক পল্লীর উন্নতি করা খুব সহজ হ'য়ে ওঠে।

বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্টের তহবিলে যে টাকা আছে তা'হ'তে পুলিশের খরচ এবং অন্যান্য কর্ম্মচারীদের বেতন বাদে যে টাকা বাংলার পল্লীর উন্নতির বাবদ দেওয়া হয়, তাতে আমার মনে হয়, যদি পল্লীবাসীগণ সমবেতভাবে কাজ কোরতে না শিখে তাহ'লে সেই টাকায় পল্লীর উন্নতিসাধন সম্ভবপর হ'তে পারে না। তাই আমার মনে হয়, এই সমবায় বিভাগ থেকে যদি প্রতি পল্লীতে কৃষক সমিতি, প্রতি পল্লীতে স্বাস্থ্য সমিতি, প্রতি পল্লীতে দুগ্ধ সরবরাহ সমিতির ব্যবস্থা করা হয় এবং সমবায় বিভাগে যথেষ্ট কর্ম্মচারী নিয়োগ ক'রে, উক্ত পল্লী সমিতির সভ্যগণ যাতে সমবেতভাবে কাজ করেন, তাহা ঐ সব কর্ম্মচারীদের দ্বারা ঠিকমত পরিদর্শন করান হয়, তাহলে সেই সব পল্লী সমবায় সমিতিদ্বারা "পল্লী সংগঠন" কার্য্য খুব সহজে হ'তে পারে। যেমন একটা দৃষ্টান্ত স্বরূপ বলা যেতে পারে——

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his Seat.)

**Mr. MUHAMMAD BARAT ALI:** It is an admitted fact, Sir, that co-operation introduced among the poor agriculturists as Rahmat-a-Baran (Shower of Heaven) but for want of proper and adequate supervision and administration it has been turned into Naran-a-Dojokh (Fire of Hell). There is no doubt that in its very beginning it became successful to a great extent and poor agriculturists were benefitted highly and were saved from the jaws of the local mahajans who used to lend money at Rs. 37½ per cent. interest to 75 per cent. while the interest on co-operative loans varied from 12½ per cent. to 15¾ per cent. per year. Before the depression the members of the rural societies used to repay their *kist* money with the full interest but I regret to say, Sir, that after the depression when no member could clear off even the interest, no consideration was made and no solution was formulated by the department. On the other hand for realisation of the debts, awards were merrily given effect to, as a result of which most of the agriculturists have been deprived of their lands and houses and have been turned into street beggars. Besides, the department enforced another instrument of oppression, I mean section 35 which is more serious than any distress warrant or police warrant or even death warrant. All on a sudden the police go to the house of the member and express that he has been fined Rs. 20/25 by the Co-operative Inspector and so he has come to realize the amount by attaching his movable properties. Then the police attach and put up the properties of the poor helpless debtor for sale. Is it not

strange and at the same time most regrettable that where a member cannot pay up a sum of Rs. 15 as interest, he is forced to pay this additional amount by way of fine imposed upon him by the sweet will of the mighty Co-operative Inspector? And this is done generally at the time when poor agriculturists are to collect cultivation expenses by selling even plough and cattle. Under this pressure, many members are compelled to go to local mahajans again. Is it not a torture to the co-operative members? Is it not like মড়ার উপর খাঁড়ার ঘা। (frying pan to the fire)? Does co-operation mean oppression?

If we contrast the present system of Co-operative Department with that of local mahajans who, we find, nowadays allow instalment on the principal amount, remitting entire interest whereas the Co-operative Department calculate and realise the nearest pie even after the awards are given at the bond rate of interest.

Let us then, Sir, look to the Central Banks. The Central Banks have been entirely left at the hands of their staff. The staff do whatever they like. They themselves make and unmake directors. The Inspectors and Auditors, particularly those who are not sufficiently qualified, do not look into the interest of the rural societies which are lives of the Central Banks. The Inspectors and Auditors go to the societies to put their signature only over the audit note prepared by the Supervisor. Under the circumstances, I find no necessity, of a large number of Auditors and Inspectors. If the principles of co-operation are followed strictly, I am sure an officer must take two days to finish the audit of the society only.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NARAYAN MUKERJI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must thank you for kindly granting me five minutes to speak on this motion. I feel that the time is too short for dealing with such an important subject, so I must confine myself to a few points only. I was expecting the Hon'ble Minister to admit frankly that the movement had completely failed but instead of that he was trying to evade the point by raising several issues.

I would like to draw your attention to the report for 1936 which points out that since 1932-36 Rs. 92,52,446 is outstanding in the Central Banks for interest alone. It is very doubtful whether any portion of this amount will ever be realised, not to speak of such interests for previous years. If we consider the fact that 1,991 societies had already gone into liquidation and 5,633 societies have been condemned on audit, we shall realise that the whole of the reserve will not only be swept away but much of the deposits and the capital will be lost.

I am afraid self-delusion comes natural to those who consider that evils arising out of insufficient supervision will be cured by lapse of time. To mark time like this is not wise; delays are sometime dangerous. I would refer to the Hon'ble Minister to go through the report of the Reserve Bank of India in this connection and make up his mind to have immediately a committee of enquiry to go into the details of the subject. I repeat the demand from this side of the House for a committee of enquiry constituting of co-operative and audit experts and with an independent non-official majority. Let such a committee enquire into the past working of the department with a view to adopting measures to build up village banks, union, non-credit and multipurpose moral welfare societies in lines suggested by the Reserve Bank. Let it also go into the question of separate audit and departmental inspection and lay down the proper duties of the Registrar, the inspecting staff and the scope given to non-official workers.

I plead for a fresh start even in this encircling gloom. I know it is painful to scrap one's dear theories but it has to be done sometimes.

I would also draw your attention to the last session's speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister who was good enough to express his gratitude to my friends Mr. Sibnath Banerji and Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal for the specific complaints made by them. He even promised to go into the matter personally and to appoint a committee if *prima facie* case could be made out. I repeat those charges of inefficiency, obstruction, political use of the movement as disclosed in recent election petition judgment. More defalcations have come to light.

I trust the Hon'ble Minister will go into this matter and would immediately appoint a committee of enquiry with a view to seeing whether by scaling down debts co-operative movement could be still saved.

**Maulvi RAJIBUDDIN TARAFDAR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir আমি আমার cut motion move কোরবো না, কারণ ইহা মুভ করার আমার অধিকার নাই। আমি শুধু এ সম্বন্ধে কিছু আলোচনা করবো। Co-operative Department সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা কোরতে গেলে অনেক কথা এসে পড়ে। সে সব কথা এক্ষেত্রে আমি বোলতে চাই না, আমি শুধু সংক্ষেপে দোটা কয়েক কথা বোলে এ প্রসঙ্গ ছেড়ে দেবো। এই বিভাগ যখন খোলা হয়েছিল তখন এর উদ্দেশ্য ছিল,—কৃষকদের অল্প সুদে ঋণ দিয়ে তাদের ঋণ-মুক্ত করা। কিন্তু এখন দেখা যাচ্ছে কৃষকদের এই বিভাগ হতে ঋণ দিয়ে দিয়ে তাদের ঋণ-ভার এতই বৃদ্ধি করা হয়েছে যে, এখন আর কৃষকদের এই Co-operative এর ঋণ কিছুতেই শোধ হবে না। এবং ইহা আরো কৃষকদের পক্ষে ক্ষতিকর হয়েছে, এই জন্য এই বিভাগের হাতে দেওয়া হয়েছে— Unlimited power— অসীম ক্ষমতা। সমস্তেরই এমনকি এই পৃথিবীরও একটা সীমা আছে, সৌর জগৎ যে এত বড় তারও একটা সীমা আছে, একটা পরিমান আছে, কিন্তু Co-operative Department

এর কোন সীমা নাই। প্রাইভেট্ মহাজনের একটা ক্ষমতার ও দায়িত্বের সীমা আছে, loan কোম্পানির ও প্রাইভেট্ মহাজনেরও তাই, কিন্তু এই Government এর Co-operative মোদ্দাস্ত প্রতাপান্বিত, ইহার ক্ষমতা অসীম। এই অসীম power নিয়ে সে তার ক্ষমতা ও প্রতিপত্তি নিরক্ষর কৃষকের উপর প্রয়োগ কোরেছে অবশ্য তার ফলে বাংলার কৃষক আজ মরণের পথে চলিয়াছে। গভর্ণমেণ্ট সঙ্গে সঙ্গে এই বিভাগ দ্বারা খানিকটা লাভবান হচ্ছে caste হিন্দু, মুসলমানেরা বিশেষ কিছুই নয়। তবে যারা বড় বড় জমিদার, নবাব সুবা (অঙ্গুলি সঙ্কেত করিয়া) ঐ জলপাইগুড়ির নবাবের মত তারাই খুব লাভবান হচ্ছে। কিন্তু এর নিষ্পেষণে নির্য্যাতিত হচ্ছে এই কৃষক শ্রেণীর মুসলমান আর অনুন্নত শ্রেণীর হিন্দু যারা নাকি কৃষিকার্য্য করে। গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনেক রকম বোলে কোয়ে কৃষকদের ঋণ-মুক্তির জন্য ঋণ-লাঘব আইন করা হয়েছে। কিন্তু যদি সেই আইন প্রাইভেট্ মহাজন বা Loan Company র মহাজনদের সকলের সঙ্গে এমনকি জমিদারের সঙ্গে পর্য্যন্ত Settlement কোরতে পারে কিন্তু Co-operative এর টাকায় কোন হাত দিতে পারে না। ঋণ-লাঘব আইনের ৩৮ ধারায় বোলেছে যে, 'no settlement under this Act of the debts of a member of a Co-operative Society registered under the Co-operative Societies Act, 1912, who owes any amount to such Society, shall be valid without the previous approval in writing of a prescribed authority.

**Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** I don't like to move a cut motion but I like to discuss about the co-operative movement in Bengal specially rural credit.

The present position of the co-operative credit movement which has touched about 5 lakhs families in Bengal is at present in a deplorable position.

Three and a quarter crore of rupees is due from the members of village societies through 118 Central Banks. The amount has practically become the frozen asset of the Central Banks as not even 10 per cent. of the dues is annually realised from the members of the societies.

The reasons for the fall in realisation I may tell you, Sir, as a Chairman of a Central Co-operative Bank, is mainly due to continued economic depression for the last 10 years. Even if the realisation continues at the present rate which is unlikely, as the operation of Debt Conciliation Boards has further affected the collection this year, it would take about 20 years for the Central Banks to collect their overdues from the members of societies. In the meantime the Central Banks are not generally advancing fresh loans to the members of societies and to add to their misfortune, the local money-lenders have also stopped the traditional small loan accommodation to the cultivators in view of the operation of Debt Settlement Boards. The functions of the Central Co-operative Banks are now, therefore, confined mainly to the realisation of old debts either by persuasive measures or by putting the societies into liquidation. But notwithstanding all the efforts of the Central Banks, the collection of these old debts could not be very successful. It is natural for the cultivators to feel a pinch at this time of their small resources in making any large payments of the debts, the usefulness or value of which they have long forgotten.

Briefly speaking the Co-operative Central Banks are now functioning as collection agents and the department is assisting them in this work, while the entire fabric of the agricultural credit in the country side has been thoroughly disorganised and the cultivators are finding no money for making any improvement in their economic conditions. If this state of thing continues for some time to come and the Government remain indifferent, not only the payment of co-operative dues will be gradually stopped, but also rent and taxes will stand in the danger of falling heavily into arrears.

In the circumstances, it is desirable that Government should formulate immediately a bold progressive policy to save the co-operative movement and the cultivators of the province. The stagnation that has come upon the co-operative movement on account of stoppage of fresh business must be removed at once. In this connection the Provincial Registrars who met in Delhi in 1936 were unanimously of opinion that no organisation could thrive unless it was allowed to develop. Therefore, the present policy of the co-operative movement is against the considered opinion of all co-operative authorities in India. It cannot be denied that it is desirable to realise the old debts gradually by slow process. But the old debts must be sufficiently scaled down and their rates of interest lowered to bring them to the level of the repaying capacity of the members. At the same time along with this, fresh loans should be freely distributed to the members of societies for productive purposes so that they may gradually improve their economic conditions by utilising these loans. In this connection the present paying capacity of the cultivators should be carefully examined and the rate of interest charged on loans should be such as they can afford to pay easily. It is not possible for the Provincial or Central Banks in the present circumstances to raise sufficient capital, at such a low rate of interest, as will enable the cultivators to make use of their money. My proposal therefore is, that Government should immediately come forward to advance the loan at a rate not more than 2 per cent. either directly, or standing guarantee for such loan. As a matter of fact, the Reserve Bank has offered to advance short-term loans for 9 months against the security of stock of marketing societies at 2 per cent. Similar advantages should be extended to the credit societies either by the Government or by the Reserve Bank at the instance of the Government.

It is for the Government to formulate a scheme in this direction. But what is wanted is that immediate and speedy steps be taken to increase the income of the agriculturists by the use of cheap money——

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** Sir, the time being very short I would refer to these few points out of a long list of omission and com-

mission of the Co-operative Department. The first point is the failure to reorganise the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society by securing popular support, on the contrary taking away all the non-official control from the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society. Secondly, failure to effect separation of audit and administrative departments though the Hon'ble Minister in his speech to-day has referred that he has done something, but we have not yet come to know what the scheme is; and there is no practical execution of the scheme so far. Thirdly, failure to give concrete and effective shape to co-operative education to the officers and employees. The scheme at Dum Dum is an absolute failure and the less said about it is better. Fourthly, failure to help handloom and cottage industries adequately and I was quite surprised to hear the Hon'ble Minister when he said that he was going to help the handloom industries while in the budget he has cut short the grant which was given last year. The fifth point is the failure to incorporate in their draft Bill provisions for a popular and democratic control. Sixthly, failure to initiate the starting of new societies especially of jute and paddy sale societies. The seventh point is failure to take steps in the cases where defalcation was alleged. I would like to mention the Hooghly case where defalcation went on for as long as 15 years; then the South Calcutta Co-operative Society with which a very high official of the Department is intimately connected; then there is the Milk Union and the injustice done to the case of Mohini Ghatak which was referred to in the last budget session. Nothing has been done to enquire into the matter or remedy the grievances.

Then I would also like to refer to the election dispute case in which the Registrar and the Superintendent of the Milk Societies and several other high officials of the Co-operative Department have come in for very strong criticisms in the hands of the presiding Judge there.

We repeat our demand for an impartial enquiry this year. We repeated this demand last year, while I was initiating discussion on this subject. I then pointed out many specific cases of corruption and abuse and I also circularised a written statement, and the Hon'ble the Co-operation Minister was good enough to assure us that an informal conference would be held; he also gave us assurances in many other matters; and the Hon'ble the Chief Minister, because he thought that the Co-operation Minister was not experienced enough—he too came forward—I do not see him in the House now—and he too assured us, and he went so far as to thank me for having circularised that statement and for bringing those specific cases to the notice of Government, and he too ended with an assurance that if a *prima facie* case was made out then he would not shirk his responsibility and would start an independent inquiry and would do every thing possible to uproot the corruption that was alleged to exist. Well, Sir, we know as a fact that reports of defalcation cases are in the hands of Government, and we

wonder why no steps are being taken in those matters. I have already referred to the election dispute case, which I believe is public property now, and there are also reports of other defalcation cases in the hands of Government. Are we to understand that, because some high officers of this department are involved in them, the department and the Minister are keeping quiet, or sitting tight over these reports? (Here the speaker reached the time-limit but was allowed to finish his speech in one minute.) I would now refer to the budget itself. Last year we sanctioned a grant of Rs. 10,53,000 and our worthy Minister, it appears, could not spend Rs. 1,50,000 out of this amount. Is not this fact somewhat astounding? I shall refer to one item of Rs. 400 that we sanctioned for the purchase of books. But it appears that still Rs. 100 is lying unspent in the hands of the department. Probably, Sir, our Minister did not find time to read any books between his trips to Darjeeling and Dinner Parties!

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, may I know how long you propose to carry on this debate?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have kept a margin of 10 minutes, so that I expect to finish this demand by 8-10 p.m.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I may again tell you, Sir, that there is a very genuine desire on the part of several members to speak on this demand.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Well, I have no objection to sit longer if the House agrees, as I have said several times.

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, I have listened with close attention to the speeches that have been delivered this evening, with regard to the co-operative movement in this province. Before I come to reply in short, to Mr. Banerjee, I would like to refer very briefly to the various acts of commission and omission—to quote my friend Mr. Sibnath Banerjee—that he has indicated in his very brief but running speech. With regard to the cases of defalcation and other things of that nature, I have got the last year's proceedings before me and I can only tell him that some of these cases did really reach the courts and were dealt with by them in their judicial proceedings. His reference to one or two other cases perhaps includes the Hooghly defalcation case and my friends Mr. Dhirendra Nath Mookherjee and Mr. Satya Priya Banerjee referred to the Ghatal defalcation and to two or three cases of that nature. These are matters, Sir, which I may assure the House are beyond the reach of this department in view of the provisions of the Co-operative Societies' Act, 1912, under which we have to function.

Many things are attributed to this department for which this department cannot be held responsible. We do not shirk our responsibility but I submit with all respect to the House that before you take us to task you should consider if it is not proper that you should vest us with the necessary powers. What power have we to pry into the internal administration of the Central Banks and the large numbers of primary societies? Take the case of the Hooghly Central Bank. What power had we except to audit the bank's account from time to time? Surely these defalcation cases were brought to light only by the audit reports of our officers.

**Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** Yes—three years after they were committed.

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Therefore, Sir, I submit with all respect that it does not lie in the mouth of Mr. Sibnath Banerjee or others of that type to lay the blame at our door, for, as I said a moment ago, we have not got any power whatsoever.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** You have got enough powers, we say.

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** As I was saying, Sir, Government have not got enough power to look into the internal administration of these banks except to give them instructions to act in a particular way, and if they do not comply with those instructions we have not got the power to enforce them.

Here I will turn to the constructive suggestions given by Mr. Satya Priya Banerjee. I was really wondering as to what he wanted to indicate to us. He suggests that the whole of the existing debt should be liquidated. Sir, has he got any idea of the amount of this debt? The primary societies number 19,896 and their debts to the Central Banks amount to the huge sum of Rs. 3 crores and 92 lakhs. Will he be prepared to sanction this amount to liquidate this debt of these primary societies?

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Yes, sanctioned! (Laughter.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** Sir, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu says that he sanctions this payment of this debt and he presumably wants that a blank cheque should be given to the Central Banks. Sir, it will have to be in favour of the Central Banks, and will the Central Bank agree to receive this cheque?

Sir, there is one other matter. It has been complained that we have been throttling non-official organisations of co-operative movement. But, Sir, I will invite my friends to look to the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society. I am extremely sorry that my friend Mr. J. N. Basu is not present here to-day. He has been elected Chairman of that society and he could explain the matter fully to my hon'ble friends here.

Sir, various other matters have been mentioned to which it is impossible for me to give a reply owing to want of time. Dealing with the suggestions of Babu Patiram Roy, I may tell him that we have already had a scheme in the line indicated by him and we are really trying to see that it takes shape at an early date. I can assure my friend Mr. Dhirendra Nath Mukherji that we have already taken action on the lines of the recommendations of the Reserve Bank and reduced the rate of interest and scaled down the interest as far as practicable.

With these words, Sir, I ask my friend Mr. Satya Priya Banerjee to withdraw his motion, otherwise I shall be compelled to oppose it.

The motion of Mr. Satya Priya Banerjee that the demand under the head "42—Co-operation" be reduced by Rs. 100, was put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Ramizuddin Ahmed that the demand under the head "42—Co-operation" be reduced by Rs. 100 was put and lost.

Then the main demand of the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary Mullick that a sum of Rs. 14,63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation" was put and agreed to.

## Discussion of Anglo-Indian Education Demand.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Before I adjourn the House I only want to mention that we are still in a deficit by 2 demands, namely, Anglo-Indian Education and Registration. Registration, as you will remember, was discussed threadbare during the supplementary budget discussion. I am very anxious, therefore, that some time should be found for a full discussion of the Anglo-Indian and European Education. So, instead of meeting at 4-45 to-morrow, I propose to sit at 4-30 p.m., i.e., 15 minutes earlier, so that in between this demand and the Demands for Industries and Forests—this 15 minutes may be applied to Anglo-Indian Education without interfering with the time given to the two demands.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the other House have vacated the Chamber by that time?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I hope so. Moreover, they sit generally up to 4-15 p.m.

I also wish to refer to the fact that certain disadvantages felt by hon'ble members as regards their travelling allowance bills and money in payment thereof from the Accountant-General, Bengal's office, were brought to my notice. I am very glad to let the House know that arrangements have been made with the Accountant-General, Bengal, by which hon'ble members will please hand over their bills to the Assembly office and the money will be paid to them one day in the week, and I hope members will kindly co-operate with us in this matter and see that there is no rush. The details are being worked out, but this is a tentative arrangement that we have arrived at.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-30 p.m. on Friday, the 25th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta on Friday, the 25th March, 1938, at 4-30 p.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 226 members.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

### Road from Dacca to Aricha.

*281. **Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware that the people of Dacca have for a long time been clamouring for a railway or at least a metalled motor road connection between the town of Dacca and Aricha over the other side of Goalundo?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability of taking steps in the matter?

**MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra Nandy, of Kasimbazar):** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The proposal for the construction of a road from Dacca to Aricha is under the consideration of Government.

**Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the consideration by the Government will be finished before the next budget is prepared?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, it is very difficult to give any idea of time, because the Irrigation Department is making certain observations. After the observations are finished, the proposal will be considered by the Board of Communications, and then the scheme will be forwarded to the Government of India.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state for how long this proposal is under the consideration of the Government?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Well, it has a long history. The original idea of a railway line by the alignment and that had to be abandoned as it was found that it was not possible to have the railway without interfering with the drainage and the spill areas of the adjoining rivers. Sir, I do not think the question of road is under consideration for a very long time. I think after the idea of railway was given up and we got the grant from the petrol fund of Government of India that this scheme was taken up as an alternative.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that by the recent inspection by the Engineer of the Irrigation Department together with the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge, it was proved beyond doubt that the spill would not be obstructed by the construction of this road?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, I have not yet received any report from the Officers mentioned on the subject.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister kindly state whether it is a fact that the District Engineer of the Dacca District Board explained the matter thoroughly before the Hon'ble Minister, and he proved that there would be no real obstruction to the spill?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, as far as I am concerned, as I am not an expert myself, it is difficult for me to give any opinion as to whether there will be any interference with the spill or not.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that he was satisfied by the arguments of the District Engineer that there will be no obstruction of the spill?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is a question of opinion.

**Mr. P. BANERJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the railway scheme was abandoned to satisfy the steamer company?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** That was certainly not so.

### Roads in the Jalpaiguri Duars.

***282. Babu UPENDRA NATH BARMAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state from which source, i.e., from Public Works Department cess, motor vehicles tax or from any other fund, the cost of construction of the metalled and tarmacadam roads in the Jalpaiguri Duars was met?

(*b*) If the roads are constructed out of Public Works Department cess, what are the reasons for reservation of the use of metalled and tarmacadam portion of the roads exclusively for motor vehicles?

(*c*) What are the reasons for not metalling the flanks of the roads by which the cars are allowed to pass?

(*d*) Are the Government considering the desirability of making the flanks of the roads metalled to keep the same in good condition during the rains in particular?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) From the provincial revenues.

(*b*) To minimise the cost of maintenance of these roads.

(*c*) and (*d*) The flanks of the roads over which bullock-carts pass are maintained in good condition. It is not proposed to metal these flanks, as the cost will be very heavy.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if this rural road is meant for rural traffic or for those who possess motor cars, namely, the European tea planters and their friends?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I think for all.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** If it is meant for rural traffic, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any instructions have been issued to see that the flanks are properly maintained for the kind of rural traffic that is very much in use, namely, bullock carts?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I believe that is done, but if that is not done, that should be done.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government considers it desirable to throw open the road to all classes of persons from whom revenues to the State are obtained, namely, the rural people as well as tea planters?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, as I have pointed out in my reply that the question is not allowing motor cars of tea planters and excluding the carts of cultivators, but the question is one of cost. If carts are allowed to pass by these roads, that will increase the recurring cost. That is why we have made arrangements or rather we have kept the flank in such a way that they may be used by these carts without any difficulty.

**Repair of the Ghatal Circuit embankment, Midnapore.**

*283. **Mr. HARENDRA DOLUI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received a petition regarding the repair of the Ghatal Circuit embankment in the subdivision of Ghatal in the district of Midnapore;

(*b*) whether any local enquiry has been made into the cause of the grievances of the petitioners;

(*c*) whether Government is contemplating any method to remedy the cause of this grievance; and

(*d*) whether the opening of Chandeswar *khal* (canal), an old scheme of the Government, be adopted to mitigate the grievances of the people?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) to (*d*) The matter is under enquiry. As the petition has only just been received, some time will be required for making the enquiry.

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who is responsible for maintaining these embankments?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, I want notice.

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** Will he be pleased to state how long these embankments have not been repaired?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, I want notice.

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** Is he aware that the breaches caused immense injury to the cultivators in the area?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Yes, Sir, I am aware that some injury is done to the crops by the breaches.

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** With reference to answers (*a*) to (*d*)—as the petition has only just been received, some time will be required for making the enquiry—will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government officers there in charge of the road have made any report regarding the breaches under repair?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I would only refer to my reply (*b*) to (*d*).

**Mr. HARENDRA DOLUI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that two petitions were submitted, one in the last session of this Assembly and the other recently?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, it is difficult for me to say how many petitions have been received on this subject.

### River Kodla in Jessore.

***284. Mr. SERAJUL ISLAM:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department aware—

(*i*) that the river Kodla in the Bongaon subdivision in the district of Jessore has become almost stagnant; and

(*ii*) that some time ago there was a scheme for excavating a *khal* connecting the river Ichamati with the Kodla near Shamkur in the same subdivision for the purpose of resuscitating the Kodla?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, are the Government considering the desirability of giving effect to the scheme?

(*c*) If so, when?

(*d*) If not, why not?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*c*) A scheme for the improvement of the river Kodla by the District Board of Jessore is now under the consideration of Government.

(*d*) Does not arise.

**Silting up of the river Nabaganga from Naldi to Lohagara.**

***285. Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department aware—

(*i*) of the fact that an area of about ten miles of the river Nabaganga from Naldi to Lohagara is being silted up; and

(*ii*) that immediate steps are necessary to prevent an area of about 40 miles up to Tona from being silted up?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister contemplating taking steps in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) (*i*) Since the opening of the Ghuznavi Cut in 1934, the discharge in the river has been increased and no appreciable increase in siltation has taken place.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) The measures for improving this and other rivers in the district of Jessore are still under consideration in consultation with the District Officer and the District Board.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action has been taken by Government on the recommendations of the District Officer, the District Board Engineer, and the District Board Chairman of Nadia, held in July 1937, and on which the Chief Engineer, Irrigation Department, gave his approval?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I think I may remind the hon'ble member of what I stated in my budget speech that I have asked all the District Boards to furnish their irrigation needs in order of urgency. I have received some, but I am waiting for the rest. When all of them are received the Special Officer who will be appointed will examine them and schemes will be taken up as finances are provided.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to reply (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether that particular area from Naldi to Lohagara has been included within the scheme that has been prepared by the Minister along with the District Board of Jessore.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, as I have already stated, the scheme referred to will be examined by the Special Officer. Until that is done I am afraid I cannot give any reply on the point.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give us an assurance that this small area of 10 miles only will be included in that scheme?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is a question of opinion.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if this matter has not been before the Government for the last twenty years?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** That is more than I can say.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the representations of the District Boards concerned, namely, Nadia and Jessore in particular as well as Murshidabad and Khulna have been in possession of Government for the last seven or eight months now?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, it is difficult to give reply to that question off hand. I have stated already that the schemes are being furnished by the District Boards through their Collectors to the Commissioners and the Commissioners are forwarding them to this department. It may be that one or two schemes on which the Chief Engineer was consulted, may have been forwarded to this department direct.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of including the small area from Naldi to Lohagara in the scheme of the District Board of Jessore?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, it is not possible to give any assurance on this question. The whole scheme will be examined by the Special Officer.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any Government Engineer or any Expert ever visited this place?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is more than I can say.

### Rivers Kua and Mourakshi.

***286. Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state whether Government are aware that during recent years the free flow of water from rivers Kua and Mourakshi has been stopped and thereby several thousand *bighas* of agricultural lands in the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, and Murshidabad have become unfit for cultivation, since water stays over them throughout the year?

(*b*) Whether public have made representations to Government through the Kua-Mourakshi Banya-Rakshya Samity asking for a remedy?

(*c*) What steps, if any, have so far been taken by Government?

(*d*) Whether Government are aware that the present state of things has been causing untold misery to the affected areas, so much so that peasants have begun leaving for other places?

(*e*) Are the Government considering the desirability of issuing a detailed statement on the subject with a view to allaying suffering and anxiety caused by the situation?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) Yes, the area is often water-logged as a result of premature artificial reclamation by embankments.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) I am advised that the best course now available is to allow Nature to raise the level of this area by spilling from the silt-carrying rivers until it has been raised high enough to drain back into the rivers.

(*d*) The member is referred to the reply to (*a*) of the question. I have no information whether the area is becoming depopulated.

(*e*) The Mor Reservoir project is under the consideration of Government: if it becomes practicable to give effect to this costly scheme, it will be possible to control the flood in the rivers.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who is this blessed officer who has advised the Hon'ble Minister to leave things to Nature for Nature to heal them up?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is a theory which has been admitted by all the scientists of the world.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is it a fact that the distress has increased due to the stoppage of the outlet of water from the Hijol Bill to the Bhagirathi, the opening out of which might help in the draining out of a substantial quantity of the flood water.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** If it is possible to undertake that scheme some improvement may be effected, but I am afraid, the difficulty of getting the proper level will stand in the way.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is prepared to consider the possibility of an alternative scheme than what is proposed here,—namely, "leaving things to Nature" involving the opening out of sufficient waterway from the Hijol to the place where these two rivers are losing themselves to Bhagirathi.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I should be very glad if any hon'ble member could give me any suggestion which will remove the difficulty under which the people of the area are suffering

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he visited this area at any time?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise here.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is possible to remove the embankment and thereby make the water flow out of that Bhil—and to keep it at a proper level?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is difficult for me to reply off-hand, but I will have the question examined.

## Hangar khal, Chittagong.

*267. **Maulana MD. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state whether he is aware of the recurrence of floods in recent years in Satkania thana in the district of Chittagong?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) of the present condition of the Hangar *khal* running through the above mentioned thana which has been almost silted up and narrowed down for a length of about 6 miles and therefore breaks away and changes courses during the rainy season which causes flood and destroys agricultural produce in many villages especially in villages of Sadha, Noapara, Neochia Temuhani, Dhemsha, Marfula, Nalua and Ghatiadenga; and

(*ii*) that a scheme was prepared and an estimate made for the canalisation of this *khal* by the Government and the Chittagong District Board made recommendations for the purpose?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of taking up at an early date the work of proposed canalisation of the *khal*?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) and (*b*) (*i*) The low-lying areas of Dhemsha, Marfula, Nalua and Ghatiadenga and Temuhani in Satkania thana drain very slowly and they are likely to remain flooded for some time after continuous heavy rain. The silting up of the Hangar *khal* tends to aggravate the liability of this neighbourhood to flooding. There was some damage to crops of some of the villages on account of the flood last year.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*c*) The scheme for re-excavation of the Chittagong Satkania Hangar *khal* was taken up under Act VI of 1920 at the instance of the persons interested by whom the whole cost estimated at Rs. 96,549 was to be borne. Government prepared the scheme and in January, 1932, appointed the District Engineer, Chittagong, as the Engineer for the scheme. The Collector reports that since then nothing has been heard of the scheme nor have the persons interested advanced any part of the cost of the scheme.

Two less costly projects designed to afford relief to this area have been included in the list of schemes to be financed from the Rural Development Grant of the Divisional Commissioner.

**Sluice gate over the Chiknai river at Panchuraibari.**

*288. **Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware—

(*i*) that crops of thousands and thousands of acres of Barabila and Ban Kri Math within police-stations Faridpur and Atgharia respectively (Pabna) are destroyed by early rush of water every year, just at the latter part of *Jaistha* through the river Chiknai; and

(*ii*) that the people of nearly 65 villages of the locality have been suffering from loss for the last 20 or 25 years?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of making an enquiry into the matter?

(*c*) Does the Hon'ble Minister contemplate formulating a scheme to erect sluice gates on the said Chiknai river near Bhutiapara police-station, Faridpur, to prevent the untimely rush of water and protect crops of the said locality?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) I have no information.

(*b*) and (*c*) There is a scheme for constructing a sluice gate over the Chiknai river at Panchuraibari. It is under examination.

**Maulvi AZHAR ALI:** In regard to answer (*a*), where the Hon'ble Minister says "I have no information" the same question was put in the last session that the crops of about thousands of acres of land in the Barabila and Ban Kri Math are destroyed by early rush of water through the river Chiknai. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what the Government has done up till now in this direction?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, what I meant by "I have no information", is that I have no information about the amount of damage which was done to the crops.

**Scheduled Castes employees in the Public Works Department office at Barisal.**

*289. **Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing—

(*i*) the number of employees serving at present in the Public Works Department office at Barisal;

(*ii*) the number of them that are

(1) Caste Hindus,

(2) Muhammadans, and

(3) Scheduled Castes?

(*b*) Whether it is a fact that there is not a single permanen employee from the Scheduled Castes in the said office?

(*c*) If the answer to question (*b*) is in the affirmative, are th Government considering the desirability of according special considera tion to members of Scheduled Castes in the matter of confirmation an recruitment henceforward?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar** (*a*) A statement is laid on the table.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) There is already a standing order of Government under whicl 15 per cent. of the total number of vacancies in the district of Bakar ganj shall be filled up by members of Scheduled Castes and minority communities. The temporary Scheduled Caste employee will be con firmed in due course if his work is satisfactory.

*Statement referred to in the reply to clause (a) of starred question No. 289 regarding the number of employees of different communities in the Communications and Buildings Branch office at Barisal*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (*a*) (*i*) Permanent | ... | 15 |
| Temporary | ... | 6 |
| Total | ... | 21 |

| | Permanent | Temporary |
|---|---|---|
| (*ii*) (1) Caste Hindus | ... 10 | 3 |
| (2) Muhammadans | ... 5 | 2 |
| (3) Scheduled Castes | ... Nil | 1 |

**Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how long this Standing Order has been in vogue in that particular district?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I think for some years in the past.

**Bandal in the Dhulleswari river near Manikganj.**

*290. **Maulvi AULAD HOSSAIN KHAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state whether the steamer company (India General Steam Navigation and Company), has put a bandal in the Dhulleswari river near the mouth of the Bethua river in Manikganj subdivision (district Dacca)?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the bandal is likely to obstruct spill flow and cause death of the river affecting communication and sanitation of Manikganj town and the whole southern portion of the Manikganj subdivision?

(*c*) What steps do Government propose taking in this matter?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) No, because the bandals are only erected in the dry season and are removed before the flood season.

(*c*) Does not arise.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if this bandalling is done at the cost of Government in the interests of the steamer companies?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** No, Sir. It is done at the cost of Government in the interest of training the flow of the river.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that the flow was passing all right, and that the bandal obstructs the flow to the Bethua river even during the dry season?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Even if they cause any obstruction during the dry season, which I understand they do not, there is no fear of their doing any permanent injury to the water channel.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to say at whose instance the bandals are raised by Government; is it upon the application of the joint steamer companies?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** This work is done on behalf of Government by the steamer companies.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is it a fact that due to this bandalling, country boats cannot freely move on the Bethua river and from the Bethua to the Dhulleswari?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, as far as I am aware arrangements are always made for free passage of the country boats.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the diversion of the stream and current of the Dhulleswari river will result in the killing of the river Bathua.

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, if it was possible to divert the course of a river by bandalling a great problem would be solved.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleasd to state whether during his tour at Manikganj it was brought to his notice that it was intentionally done by the steamer companies to kill the Bethua river?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Yes, Sir. Some complaint was made to me on the subject and I ordered an immediate enquiry.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** If it is not the intention by bandalling, to fix the course of the river along a particular line, may we know what is the purpose of the bandalling?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is true the object of bandalling is training the course of a river. At the junction of two rivers steps are always taken not to obstruct any of the courses.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is not a fact that the "killing" of the river Bethua will make Manikganj the abode of malaria?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

### Atrai and Gur rivers, Rajshahi.

*291. **Maulvi MOSLEM ALI MOLLAH:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware—

(i) that the Atrai and the Gur rivers of the Rajshahi district have been silted up; and

(ii) that in the summer season some parts of the river completely dry up making navigation in them impossible and causing loss of trade and commerce?

(*b*) If the answers to (*a*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action he intends to take in the matter?

(*c*) If the answers to (*a*) are in the negative, are the Government considering the desirability of enquiring into the matter?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) (*i*) No. They are in flow during the flood season but siltation has certainly occurred.

(*ii*) Navigation is not possible in the Atrai river during the summer season but the Gur river remains navigable to shallow boats up to 2½ feet draft.

(*b*) and (*c*) The possibilities of measures for improving the rivers will be investigated.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the places where siltation has taken place in the river Atrai?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I want notice, Sir.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating the establishment of a Waterways Board to tackle this problem of resuscitating the dead and dying rivers of this province?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Yes, Sir.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that, as a result of this siltation, the natural flow of the river Atrai has been impeded even during the flood season?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** That is only natural.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give us an idea as to when that Board will be set up?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** As I have already pointed out, during the budget discussion, the necessary grant for this Board has been sanctioned by this House, and it will be formed shortly.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government have taken to make the river Atra navigable throughout the year?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** Sir, to keep a river navigable throughout the year is a problem of the greatest magnitude. We have not yet come to any solution regarding the river.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Have Government taken any steps whatever up till now to make some portions, at least, of the river Atra navigable throughout the year?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** It is very difficult to say what was done in the past. I am awaiting the formation of the Waterways Board as this river is mainly meant for communication. I think this is a work for that Board to take up.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that all work for the resuscitation of the dead and dying rivers of this province has been suspended pending the formation of the Waterways Board?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** No, Sir. Only works concerning rivers used for communication have been suspended in the hope that the Board would be formed shortly.

**Khal running from Bharadia to Dighirpar via Sararchar in Kishoreganj subdivision.**

***292. Mr. BIRENDRA KISHORE RAY CHOUDHURY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department aware—

(*i*) that the *khal* running from Bharadia to Dighirpar *via* Sararchar in Kishoreganj subdivision in the district of Mymensingh has completely silted up;

(*ii*) that malaria and other diseases have broken out in epidemic form in that area; and

(*iii*) that the *khal* was surveyed and its conditions investigated by the Irrigation Department in 1935-36?

(*b*) If the answers to (*a*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any work of excavation is contemplated in the present year?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) The area is malarious.

(*iii*) No. Only gauge readings were recorded on the old Brahmaputra at Bharardia and on the Ghorautra at Dighirpar in 1935.

(*b*) No.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when Government contemplate undertaking the necessary work in order to save this tract from malaria and other diseases?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I would refer the hon'ble member to my answer (*b*).

## Establishment of Debt Settlement Boards in Hatiya and Ramgati, Noakhali.

*293. **Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department aware that Debt Settlement Boards have been established in all thanas of the district of Noakhali except in the Island stations, viz., police-station Hatiya and Ramgati?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the two Debt Settlement Boards already established in two of the Unions of the police-station Sandwip have not been given powers under section 9 of the Agricultural Debtors Act?

(*c*) Has the Hon'ble Minister received representations from the persons of the district on the question of the establishment of the Boards in the Island circle of the Noakhali district?

(*d*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering it desirable to introduce immediately Debt Settlement Boards in all the Unions of police-stations Hatiya, Ramgati, etc., and in the remaining Unions of police-station Sandwip?

**MINISTER in charge of CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT and RURAL INDEBTEDNESS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary Mullick):** (*a*) No: a Board has been established in Hatiya police-station.

(*b*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Boards will be established as soon as recommendations are received from the local authorities.

**Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID:** With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the representations

were received from the people of the island for the establishment of Debt-Settlement Boards in the island circle of the Noakhali district?

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** I must ask for notice, Sir.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state as to who takes the initiative as regards the establishment of these Boards—is it the Government or the District authorities?

**The Hon'ble Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK:** It is the district authorities, Sir, who take the initiative.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** In case the district authorities do not recommend the establishment of these Boards, do Government order that such Boards should be established?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is a hypothetical question.

**Eradication of the water-hyacinth pest in Faridpur.**

***294. Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture and Industries Department aware—

(*i*) that in the district of Faridpur, specially in the subdivision of Goalundo, water-hyacinth has been destroyed and the cultivators' lands are almost free from the pest; but

(*ii*) that the pest subsists in the railway ditches and the *zemindars' khals, bils*, channels and watercourses and the District Board and railway road side ditches; and

(*iii*) that on the advent of the rainy season there is danger of the weed spreading upon the agricultural lands?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*iii*) is in the affirmative, do the Government propose taking any action in the matter?

(*c*) If so, when and what?

**MINISTER in charge of AGRICULTURE and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja Habibullah Bahadur, of Dacca):** (*a*) (*i*) Yes. Systematic action is being taken for eradication of the pest with voluntary as well as paid labour with the co-operation of local bodies and Union Boards and under the supervision of Subdivisional and Circle Officers so that cultivators' lands are now almost free from water-hyacinth.

(*ii*) and (*iii*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*c*) Some *zemindars* are now assisting in the removal of water-hyacinth from their *khas* land and the question of clearing railway side land and borrow-pits is under consideration of the Railway authorities. Meanwhile the district authorities are taking necessary action for preventing the inrush of water-hyacinth into cleared areas. In order to strengthen the hands of district authorities, the Bengal Water-hyacinth Act, 1936, has been put into force throughout the district.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state, with reference to answer (*c*), what steps Government have taken to prevent this danger?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** Government are enforcing the Act, Sir.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is in the discretion of the railway authorities to remove water-hyacinth from the lands in their possession?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Sir, I want to draw the Hon'ble Minister's attention to one point. The Hon'ble Minister has answered that this subject is under the consideration of the railway authorities, and he has also said that the Water Hyacinth Act has been enforced. If that is so, then how is it that the matter is under the consideration of the railway authorities? How does he reconcile the two statements?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is not the correct way of putting a question. You ought to have put it in this way: "Why the Act has not been enforced in the railway lands?" I hope that the Hon'ble Minister will answer this question.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** The railway lands are under the control of the Government of India.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any notice has been served under this Act on the railway authorities to remove water hyacinth from their lands?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** Government have taken up the matter with the railways.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Is the Hon'ble Minister in a position to deny, with reference to his answer (*a*)(*i*), that the whole of the Goalundo subdivision of the Faridpur district is choked up with water hyacinth?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** That is a matter of opinion.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have actually written to the railway authorities on this matter?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** Yes.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Has any provision been made in the budget for the eradication of water hyacinth?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Surely, that you can find out from the budget!

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** When did the Local Government write to the railway authorities?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I ask for notice, Sir.

**Detenu Babu Satya Ranjan Bakshi.**

***295. Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Special) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the present whereabouts of detenu Babu Satya Ranjan Bakshi of village Barthi in the district of Bakargañj;

(*ii*) the present state of his health; and

(*iii*) whether he has been receiving any family allowance?

(*b*) If the answer to clause (*a*) (*iii*) is in the affirmative, what is the exact amount of the same?

(*c*) Do the Government apprehend that his release will be detrimental to public peace and tranquillity?

(*d*) If the answer to clause (*c*) is in the negative, do the Government think it desirable to release him soon?

**MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin):** He has recently been unconditionally released.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to answer (*a*) (*iii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether after his release Babu Satya Ranjan Bakshi has been drawing any allowance, and if so, how much?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** He has been getting a family allowance of Rs. 150 a month. The hon'ble member should remember that he was released only a week ago, and, therefore, this question does not arise.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he will get any allowances after release either for himself or for his family?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Wait and see.

## Short Notice Questions.

### Holding of public meetings in connection with Municipal elections within the jurisdictions of Serampore, Bhadreswar and Uttarpara in Hooghly district.

***295A and 295B. Mr. SUKUMAR DUTTA and Babu RADHA NATH DAS:** (*a*) Has the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department been called to a notice, dated 10th February, 1938, promulgated by the Superintendent of Police, Hooghly, forbidding under section 30 of Act V of 1861, the holding of any public meeting within the jurisdictions of Serampore, Bhadreswar and Uttarpara police-stations of Hooghly district, for a period of 3 months?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that the election of commissioners for the Serampore Municipality takes place on the 19th March, 1938; and

(*ii*) that the election will be seriously hampered by meetings being forbidden in support of the candidature of the various candidates?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the advisability of directing the local authorities to notify that the notice is not intended to apply to meetings held in connection with the ensuing Municipal election?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*c*) Local authorities have made it clear by the issue of a notice that meetings held in connection with the Municipal elections will not be affected by the order under section 30.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the grounds on which meetings were prohibited by the Superintendent of Police?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It appears that for the last 15 or 16 years from Iduzoha to Muharrum for 3 months it has been customary in that area to issue this notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken by the local authorities to ensure that meetings in connection with municipal election would be conducted without any police interference?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** All meetings have been conducted without any police interference and the election is over.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

**(answers to which were laid on the table)**

### Clerks in the civil courts of Jessore.

**78. Khan Sahib Maulana AHMED ALI ENAYETPURI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing—

(*i*) how many clerks are there in the civil courts of the Jessore district;

(*ii*) how many of them are—

(1) Mussalman, and

(2) non-Mussalman; and

(*iii*) how many of them are—

(1) permanent, and

(2) non-permanent?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government are taking any strict principle in the matter of raising the percentage of Mussalmans?

(*c*) If so, what is that principle?

**MINISTER in charge of the JUDICIAL and LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain, Khan Bahadur):** (*a*)(*i*) 121.

(*ii*) (1) 41 and (2) 80.

(*iii*) (1) 112 and (2) 9.

(*b*) and (*c*) Government have fixed 33⅓ per cent. to be the minimum and not the maximum for the appointment of Muhammadans in the district of Jessore and that there is no bar to the appointment in excess of this percentage, if otherwise found suitable. The existing is 33·9 per cent. and only slightly in excess.

**Khan Sahib Maulana AHMED ALI ENAYETPURI:** With reference to (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in what year the ratio of 33⅓ per cent. was fixed by Government?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** I want notice.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the appointing authorities interpret the rules by taking 33⅓ per cent. to be the maximum percentage for the Muslim instead of minimum?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** The circular as it stands, enunciates it to be the minimum, and a person with commonsense will interpret it so.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason why the number of Muslim employees does not exceed 33⅓ per cent.?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** No answer can be given to this question: they have always taken the minimum as the maximum.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when we are all very anxious to hear him why he does not speak louder?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Appointments of Government Pleaders, Public Prosecutors, etc., from the members of the Scheduled Castes for the dsitricts of Dacca and Mymensingh.**

**79. Mr. MONMOHAN DAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing, separately, for the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh the number of—

(*a*) Government pleaders,

(*b*) Assistant Government pleaders,

(*c*) Public Prosecutors,

(*d*) Assistant Public Prosecutors, and

(*e*) Honorary Magistrates,

from the members of the Scheduled Castes communities?

**The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur:** No member of the Scheduled Castes holds any of these appointments in either Mymensingh or Dacca.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government contemplate the appointment of some Honorary Magistrates from the scheduled castes in the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise. I think it should be definitely known that supplementary questions can only arise if there is something to be further known arising out of the question and the reply. Mr. Bari is a lawyer and I think he understands that this is the meaning and I hope other members will also kindly realise that. It is not for the purpose of filling up the lacunæ in either the question or the answer except such as strictly arises owing to any defect in the answer to a question that it is permissible to ask supplementary questions in order to get further information. In this question if you wanted to know merely the number, surely you were entitled to put anything relating to that, but whether as a result of that number something more is to be done by Government that question cannot strictly arise.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Government is contemplating to fill up any vacancies in the post of Honorary Magistrates in future in the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh by the members of the scheduled castes?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Maulvi ABDUL BARI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason why none of the scheduled caste people holds the position of Honorary Magistrate in the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That does not arise.

**Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of appointing Honorary Magistrates in the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh from the members of the scheduled castes?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**80. Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the Bogra-Santahar Road passes through many important places and *bandars* in the district and if so, whether he would consider the desirability of including this road in the scheme which is essential for the development of the district even though it might compete with the railways?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Minister in charge is not here. He should have been here in his seat and I find that none of the other Ministers are prepared to answer it. I think I will have to keep this question over for to-morrow.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** He has put a question which is one of mere opinion. If there is nothing in the question which requires further information, will any purpose be served by putting it off till to-morrow?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is very difficult for me to say anything now. In any case the Hon'ble Minister should have been in his place and I find other Ministers are not prepared to reply.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### 10—Forest.

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 12,45,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "10—Forest".

Sir, while moving for the grant under the head "10—Forest" for the year 1937-38 on the 4th September, 1937, the important features of the forest budget were explained for the advantage of the members. As the budget for the next year is being presented after so short an interval, it is perhaps unnecessary for me to go over the whole ground again. It will not be out of place, however, to mention the progress which has since been made on the following important problems:—

As mentioned in the budget speech for 1937-38 there was a conference in December last at Delhi of provincial representatives in which proposals for the formation of a new Provincial Forest Service were considered to secure uniformity. The conference made certain recommendations. The opinion of the Government of India on all these recommendations has not yet been received, but in accordance with one of the recommendations of the conference, Government have decided to depute two candidates for training at the Forest Research Institute and College, Dehra Dun, with a view to their appointment to the new service. Selection of candidates is being made in consultation with the Public Service Commission.

In my speech of the 4th September 1937, I mentioned the evils and the dangers consequent on the progressive denudation of forests in West Bengal. A representative committee of officials and non-officials will be appointed very shortly to investigate into the facts and to make recommendations to Government as to the remedies which should be applied to prevent this grave threat to the prosperity of the countryside. The committee will visit the districts of Bankura, Birbhum and Midnapore and make local enquiries before framing their recommendations.

The policy of Government is to conserve all valuable forests as far as possible, whether publicly or privately owned, in order to maintain local and provincial supplies of timber and fuel, and to protect the countryside against flood and drought. With this end in view Government have recently taken over management of certain private forests in East Bengal by agreement with, and at the request of, the proprietors.

An experienced officer of the Bengal Forest Service has been deputed to investigate into and report on the extent of the existing forests, the areas suitable for aforestation, etc., in the district of Nadia and other adjoining districts.

The question of preservation of wild life, which has become very acute is also engaging attention. Some of the rarer species of animals and birds have already become extinct, and it is feared that, if proper steps are not taken in the near future, many other valuable and beautiful species may disappear. Government have introduced the Rhinoceros Preservation Bill and it has been recently passed by the Assembly and by the Legislative Council. They have also under consideration a proposal to amend the Wild Birds and Animals Preservation (Bengal Amendment) Bill. A proposal for the establishment of

game sanctuaries and for the formation of a game preservation division to control these sanctuaries is also under consideration of Government and a scheme is being formulated in consultation with selected officers and certain associations. Such sanctuaries when established, will not only preserve the more beautiful forms of wild life, but, will also be a source of instruction and diversion to the public, who will be able to see these animals and birds in their natural state.

With a view to preserve the khasmahal forests in Chittagong from unrestricted denudation, Government sanctioned in 1925 the following proposals of the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division for better management of the Forests:—

That the areas in khasmahal forests which are steep ridges covered with dense jungle and which cannot be brought under the plough, should be transferred to the Forest Department and made reserved forests;

that forests, which are suitable for permanent cultivation, should be kept under the Collector; and

that the khasmahal forests should be gazetted as protected forests.

This arrangement has not worked quite smoothly. There has been friction between the khasmahal tenants and the local forest officials. At a representative Conference of the tenants held at Cox's Bazar in October 1937, certain grievances of the tenants were put forward against the local forest administration. A preliminary enquiry into these grievances was promptly made, and the following measures have already been sanctioned in the Cox's Bazar area:—

Isolated patches of protected forests surrounded by cultivation and away from the forest reserves are to be disforested, and handed over to the khasmahal for conversion into grazing grounds, etc.

The practice of issuing fuel permits to all those who apply for grazing passes will be discontinued.

Village vigilance committees will be formed to educate people against transgressions of forest laws, etc., and to promote better relations with the Forest Department.

These measures are only preliminary. Enquiries are still going on, and further measures will be taken to meet the grievances of the tenants, after Government are in possession of all the facts.

Two experienced officers of the Forest and the Excise Departments have been asked to investigate as to whether salt can be manufactured on a commercial scale in the Sunderbans. This scheme will bring some good revenue to Forest Department as fuel will be required for the manufacture of salt.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 12,45,000 for expenditure under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100.

We have listened to the speech of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest. I put a question to him in the last session asking if he was aware of the forest grievances in Cox's Bazar and in reply he said he knew nothing. Since then some resolutions were adopted at a representative conference of the afflicted tenants on the 15th October 1937 and copies of those resolutions were sent to him at that time. Those resolutions were repeated in the Chittagong Moslem League Conference and the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and the Minister in charge of Forests were informed about them and they assured us that they would look into the matter and redress the grievances. After all these, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest says that patches of land in the khasmahal area will be released so as to provide pasture and grazing grounds. I take the advantage of this motion standing in my name not to censure the Ministry, because the present Ministry is not to be blamed for what was done by the Forest Department of the old Government, but to invite serious attention of the Government to the pitiable plight of the agriculturists of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar by the reservation policy on the one hand and high forest imprests on the other. The Local Government have no forest policy of its own and they are supposed to follow the forest policy of the Government of India. But the working of the policy was left in the hands of the Conservator of Forests. His only business was to create a service tenure and to extend the forest and forest area. The policy pursued in my district show that it is in the direction of converting Bengal into a forest, not for the good of Bengal, but for the good of forest conservancy. I may point out to you that Chittagong covers an area of 2,487 sq. miles out of which 1061 miles are reserved forest and 194 sq. miles protected forest, and that is more than half of Chittagong district. Therefore the other day I told the Hon'ble Minister and Secretary that you had better make the entire district of Chittagong a forest just giving some room somewhere for its population of over 17 lakhs. The forest policy in Bengal seems to be that Forest Department does not exist for the good of the agricultural population but that the agricultural population should be exploited in the interests of the conservation of forests. If I had not been handicapped by short time at my disposal, I would have been able to demonstrate to any impartial Tribunal how wrongly the Forest Administration is being conducted in Bengal and contrary to Indian Forest policy.

**Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED:** That is the case with Police Administration also.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** With regard to the Police Administration the case is different. The Police commits

mischief in the open and plains but Forest mischief is committed in the dark forest and interior—nobody knows anything about it and nobody enquires about it. That is my grievance and that is the reason why I move this motion. I wish to bring to the notice of the House untold oppression is committed in the outlying area of Chittagong which unfortunately is far off from the seat of Government. There is an adage, viz., far from Jupiter, far from thunder; and I would add far from Jupiter, far from shelter. Chittagong on the one hand suffers from the depredation of wild animals, and on the other from extortion of petty forest officers. I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister in charge what a grave situation has been created by the Forest Department, Chittagong, by absurd and unnecessary restrictions on the one hand and the high forest imposts on the other.

I just tell you how the people are suffering. In the year 1921 when there was the non-co-operation movement the non-co-operators found an easy prey in these distressed tenants in their campaign against Government. Mr. Birley who was then the Collector said that he objected to the working plan that was in force on the ground that it did not provide for the minimum requirements of the agricultural population. I quote the opinion of Mr. Birley who was transferred from the Midnapore district to Chittagong and Midnapore is the place from which the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy comes. The Forest Department said that Chittagong was hostile to reservation. There also Mr. Birley exposed the fallacy just as Mr. Jack did with regard to Muhammadan cultivators in Faridpur. In the year 1921 Mr. Birley said there was nothing wrong in the Chittagong agriculturists, but there is something wrong in the method of forest administration which is responsible for the antipathy of the masses towards the Forest Department. I have little time at my disposal otherwise I could have demonstrated the mischief of the unnecessary restrictions made by creation of khasmahal protected forest. The khasmahal forests are small patches of jungles interspersed with cultivation. I may be permitted to say that the resolutions were passed at the tenants' conference at Cox's Bazar regarding Forest, in which Major Hyde, the Collector, and the Subdivisional Officer were also present. It says that khasmahal forest should be made over to the khasmahal because they are not worth protecting or reserving. Although the Forest Department have taken over the management of the khasmahal forest, they have not developed them at all. What sort of forests are these? They are really not forests of any mention, because they have no timber or commercial value. The Commissioner of the Division also opposed reservation of khasmahal forest and remarked that "the difficulty in the existence of khasmahal forest alongside reserved forest has been exaggerated".

The Commissioner in his review of working plan of 1919 says that the khasmahal forests are "small patches of jungles interspersed with

many cultivated areas along the boundaries of reserved forest. In fact they unnecessarily restrict the movement of cultivators and their cattle. That was in the year 1922. In 1919 there were 241 sq. miles of reserved forests. In the course of time it has come to 1,061 sq. miles and 194 sq. miles of protected forests. There has been huge increase but still the Forest Department is not satisfied. In Khulna there is a very good timber forest, and the income from Sunder trees and other forest produce is very high, while in Chittagong the value of the timber produce is almost nil. Although by comparison the Chittagong Forest Division comprises 1/6th of the entire Reserve Forest, yet the income from timber is not even 1/30th of the entire forest timber revenue. Still Mr. Cowan chose to say that there was potential forest wealth in the Chittagong forest, but I can quote from Mr. Cowan's own observation that there was no geological survey of Chittagong for anything of the kind. The Chittagong Hill Tracts were also within the Chittagong Forest Division till 1909. Chittagong forest was merely low hills and is only scrub jungle, on the tillas or ridges. There was no growth of sal, teak, deodar or any other valuable tree there and still Mr. Cowan wanted to class it under class II, the class of forest that has a timber value for commercial purposes. I venture to say that Mr. Cowan was wrong. His anticipation was not fulfilled, I mean his working plan was not justified by subsequent results. The Chittagong Forest Division forest was created so far back as 1873. Nothing was done till 1893. Large areas of forest were kept reserved from 1893 to 1907 and nothing tangible was done—there was no development—there was no plantation of bamboos or of any other trees. This demonstrates that there was no potential wealth in the Chittagong forest and so nothing has been done.

They are spending a huge amount of money on the staff but to no result, and they say in their Administration Report from year to year that it is very difficult to manage the Chittagong forest on account of its hugeness of area, and on account of the antipathy of the people: that is the slogan they put up from year to year. The Forest Department has all along had its demands passed on speculation but, Sir, the real fact in connection with the Chittagong reserve forests demonstrates the nature of their speculation. That is, Sir, what they have been doing so long and they are always able to get their demands passed, to inflict suffering on us. In the budget demand (in the Red Book) Rs. 1,28,000 has been provided for the revision of pay of the forest guards and the forest staff, out of which Rs. 14,000 will be given to new private management for the control of the forest in Midnapore and Mymensingh and Rs. 1,14,000 would go for the new Conservator, or Second or Third or Fourth Conservator for all these years. So if you will kindly consider the matter, you will find that even on a commercial basis the Chittagong Reserve Forest is not at all justified. Government's own verdict is that the Chittagong forest produce is of very low value and the forests in the Khas Mahals are forests which are only small patches of

lands interspersed with cultivation along the boundary of reserves or the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Trespass into the protected forest is forbidden and when cattle go into it or they have to pass through it the cultivators are prosecuted. And this prosecution, Sir, is of two kinds. Some prosecutions are taken to the courts and some prosecutions are dealt with by the forest officers under section 68 of the Indian Forest Act. Large powers are enjoyed by the forest officers in charge of outlying forest ranges. In the last year's Administration Report for 1935-36 you will find that in Chittagong 946 forest cases were taken to the court and as many as 1,955 cases were dealt with by the forest officers. There is a provision in the Forest Act that a man who is simply suspected by a forest guard can be prosecuted by him, and section 68 of the Forest Act permits the forest officer the exercise of power of compounding offences by accepting a sum of money or compensation, etc. You can easily visualise the position of a poor cultivator who is alleged to break a forest rule coming 80 miles from the village to the town to defend himself. Therefore to avoid this expense and also to avoid absence from his occupation in his village this poor cultivator is obliged to compound his offence by paying whatever the forest guard or the forest ranger demands from him. So this practice of compounding puts large powers in the hands of the forest guards which are very much abused. Sir, it is not my own invention, this abuse was visualised even by the India Government in its forest policy of 1894. "An intermixture of plots of Government land used for grazing only but upon which trespass is forbidden with the cultivation of occupancy or proprietory holders is apt to lead to extreme abuses and specially so when these plots are under the management of the Forest Department." Therefore they have discouraged and condemned the creation of protected forests or their management by Forest Departments because it leads to an extreme abuse of the powers. But still the Forest Minister wants to reserve these forests where State interests are trivial. Therefore I warn the Government of Bengal that in Chittagong we will not be responsible for any agrarian movement and there if any one fosters this agrarian movement, they will do so on this forest issue alone. And if there will be any agrarian movement, it will, in all probability, be first in Khas Mahal area, my own constituency, or in the areas bordering Chittagong Hill Tracts. I, therefore, warn the Government of the situation which they must face, if they do not solve the forest problem in Chittagong immediately.

I will now say a word or two about the removal of the forest produce. Before the creation of Reserves, Protected or otherwise people were allowed to remove forest produce covering their minimum requirements under the pass system that was in force before the so-called improved schedule of conditions and rates, dated 1st of July 1916. Mr. Cowan writes in his working plan (paragraph 59—page 12) "the people engaged

in agriculture are largely dependent upon the forest reserve. Prior to reservation the removal of forest produce was regulated by the issue of passes under orders of the Collector. Passes were of two kinds "A" Form Passes entitled the holder to remove either for sale or for his own use one head-load of firewood daily throughout the year and the "B" Form Pass entitles the holder to remove one head-load of firewood, bamboos, fencing sticks, or thatch grass for his own use and not for sale and to graze six heads of cattle daily throughout the year. This system was extended to the Reserve Forest. In 1915 a monthly, or a half-yearly pass was issued entitling the holder to remove one head-load of bamboos daily either for his own use or for sale. This system of A and B pass was changed by schedule of condition rates, dated 1st July 1916, excepting the special bamboo pass. The B pass provided grazing, fuel wood, bamboos, fencing stakes, house-posts, thatching, sun grass, in short minimum requirements of the people at the rate of 12 annas per annum while the value of A pass for those articles for sale and consumption was Re. 1. Mr. Cowan suggested separation of grazing and fuel pass and increase of the fuel pass for all purposes to Re. 1. This enhancement from 12 annas annual fee for grazing and fuel and other necessary articles to Rs. 1-12 was effected.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri will now move his motion. Before he does so I might say at once that I propose to close this debate and put this demand on the motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri. I am informed that there will be another speaker from the Congress side and one speaker from the Proja Group. After that, unless any member of the European Group wants to speak I shall close this debate. I shall then take up Anglo-Indian education because I find many members are anxious to discuss that subject.

**Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** Will not, Sir, the representatives of labour get any chance of speaking on this matter?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Their chance will come in in connection with the Industry's demand.

**Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** But, Sir, we are also interested in the Forest Department Labour.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But I have not been informed of it.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** We too will have to say something, Sir.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 12,45,000 demanded under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100 (policy and administration).

Sir, I would just raise a discussion on the policy and administration of this department. Forest no doubt occupies a very small portion of our budget, but the issues that are raised by the forest budget are neither small nor unimportant. The principal question with which we have to deal in tackling the Forest budget is whether the forests stand for the benefit of the people or for the benefit of the services exclusively. Mr. Rudyard Kipling in one of his Many Inventions, of course, starts with the proposition that "of all the wheels of public service that turn under the Indian Government, the Department of Woods and Forests is the most important". But, Sir, I am not prepared to confuse between the services and the department. The department certainly is more important than the services. The department stands for earning revenue and forest is described as a major head of provincial revenue. But in recent times, Sir, it has come to be a misnomer. Our revenues from Forest have dwindled and gone below 20 lakhs of rupees, and our expenditure stands at 17 lakhs of rupees or so. It is going to be almost a non-paying department, yet the charges of the department are much too high and even growing. It is against this high expense ratio of the department, Sir, that I am going to enter my protest. And I can do no better than start with the history of growth and decline of the revenue of this department during the whole period of reforms. I shall not tire out the patience of this House by repeating all the figures from 1921-22 to 1938-39. I will only give the quinquennial averages. Now, Sir, in the first quinquennium, that is, from 1921-22 to 1925-26, our forest revenue stood at Rs. 23,61,000 per annum, and our expenditure at Rs. 12,80,000 or so, and we used to earn a surplus of about Rs. 10,81,000 or about 11 lakhs per annum. That was the position in the first quinquennium. In the next quinquennium from 1926-27 to 1930-31 our revenue increased. It went up to Rs. 29,91,000 or about 30 lakhs per annum, and our expenditure stood at Rs. 14,94,000, that is, at about Rs. 15 lakhs, and we earned a net income or surplus of Rs. 14,96,000, that is, about Rs. 15 lakhs per annum. In the next, i.e., the third quinquennium, 1932-36 our annual receipts on an average were so low as Rs. 17 lakhs but our annual expenditure stood nearly at the same figure, as in the previous lustrum, viz., Rs. 14,81,000, and hence the surplus dwindled to Rs. 2,18,000 in place of about Rs. 11 lakhs in the first quinquennium and of about 15 lakhs in the second. The position did not change much in the subsequent period, that is, between 1936-37 and the budget of 1938-39. Now, on an average we are budgeting for a revenue of Rs. 19,21,000, that is, under Rs. 20 lakhs, while we are budgeting on an average for an expenditure of so much as Rs. 15,77,000 to earn that revenue. And this year, in particular, we

have budgeted for Rs. 17,16,000, and we propose to earn only a surplus of Rs. 2 lakhs or so. This is the present position then that instead of an annual surplus of Rs. 11 lakhs in the first quinquennium and of 15 lakhs in the second, we are now going to get a surplus of Rs. 2 lakhs and odd. Yet, we see that our expenditure, which has increased in the meantime—from 12 or 13 lakhs to 17 or 18 lakhs—is being maintained to earn a surplus of only 2 or 3 lakhs. In the present position, in the uneconomic exploitation of our forests, the whole department, as my friend opposite has said, stands self-condemned.

Now, Sir, when such is the position, one inevitable question is, what do the Government propose to do with regard to retrenchment of expenditure in this department? Government cannot plead that they have no well-considered suggestions before them, rather they have ample suggestions before them. The Swan Retrenchment Committee recommended a total cut of about Rs. 2 lakhs of recurring expenditure under the head Forest. Their first recommendation was that the post of second Conservator should be held in abeyance till revenue improved to the figure of Rs. 28 or 30 lakhs. But we are not going to earn even 20 lakhs now and yet at this stage Government are maintaining the post of second Conservator of Forests. Then, Sir, the Committee's next recommendation was that some of the divisions should be amalgamated. Government say that the old position must remain unchanged, as they consider that this suggestion of the Retrenchment Committee is quite impracticable and unacceptable. Their third recommendation was to cut out the post of the Forest Utilisation Officer. Government say that is also unacceptable—why?—they say, "to earn revenue." But they are not earning revenue at all, they are spending almost the whole revenue on the departmental services, yet they pretend that to earn revenue a Forest Utilisation Officer is necessary. The fourth recommendation of the Swan Committee was that the cadre of the Indian Forest Service should be reduced by 8 posts. There also the position remains unchanged. Their next recommendation was that the post of Utilisation and Working Plans Officer should be discontinued. But this Government think it is essential to retain that post too. Thus all the recommendations that were made by the Second Retrenchment Committee have been turned down with the exception of one post, viz., that of the Forest Engineer. This is how the Government have treated the recommendations of the second Retrenchment Committee, a committee that was appointed by the Provincial Government in their days of distress and deficit budgets. Yet so far as the Forest Department is concerned, we have no reason to think that the revenue position has improved in any remarkable way.

Then, Sir, my honourable friend, the Minister in charge of the department, has referred to the December conference at which probably he was present. Let me quote, Sir, a portion of the speech made by His Excellency the Viceroy in opening the Conference. His Excellency

said,—"Even after the exclusion of Burma there still remains in India a total area of 99,746 square miles of forests of which 71,357 square miles are reserved; the total number of animals grazing in that area was over 11½ millions" and——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Rai Chaudhuri, your time is up.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** I want two minutes more, Sir. His Excellency concluded with the observation that forest's contribution to the maintenance of India's livestock should be recognised. How is our Forest Department going to help that?—well, by punishing on the whole about 2,000 to 3,000 men for grazing offences per year. Sir, to relieve these poor people, I can only present this Government with a suggestion on the lines of what has been done by the Madras Government. The Hon'ble Mr. Rajagopalchari in his speech introducing the Madras budget observed, "Another proposal of the Government also involves the relinquishing of a big slice of revenue for the benefit of the rural population. The Government propose to reduce by one-half the present rate of grazing fees in the reserved forests throughout the Presidency with effect from the 1st April, 1938. By this means a long standing grievance will be removed, and a large section of the agricultural population will be benefited. The loss of revenue will be Rs. 3 lakhs per annum". This is the gift that the Madras Government is going to make to its rural population. Where is the message from our Ministry? Our Ministry, on the contrary, is going to continue unabated the grazing fees and the policy of punishing the people behind the offending cattle. It is surely, Sir, a policy of 'resurrection of the man behind the plough' and that with a vengeance indeed!

(Here the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** Sir, I rise to support the motion so ably moved by my hon'ble friend Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri, because not only is the Forest Department badly administered as my hon'ble friend has shown, but there is a string of owes felt by my brethren in my constituency as well as in other parts of Bengal owes which can justly be charged to the action of the Forest Department.

More than 600 square miles of the area in my constituency, Jalpaiguri-*cum*-Siliguri constituency, is under the Forest Department. So I am stating here the facts which came to my personal knowledge and observation. Sir, one of the main grievances of the cultivators there against this Department is its policy of aforestation. Within the period of 20 years nearly 34,000 acres of land mostly under cultivation and the rest grazing blocks have been converted into reserved forest land. In Jalpaiguri Division, Diana a new range of reserved

forests, containing about 12,000 acres of land that had once been under cultivation, and a larger portion of the rest, grazing blocks. Just a year or two ago in Barasalkumar Taluk in Jaldapara Mouza about 400 acres of cultivable jote land has been resumed by the Government for non-payment of rent and handed over to the Forest Department in spite of the fact that there were a number of *jotedars* who applied to the Government for purchasing the land. The taluk is large in size and has been noted for its paddy crop. Is paddy to be neglected for development of the forest area? Does the civilising policy of the Government suggest there are to be more and more forests and less and less of paddy cultivation? The taluk to which I have been referring is now completely surrounded by forests. The people resident in the area live at the mercy of the officers of the Department.

Forest elephants and other wild animals ravage the fields and spoil the crops killing cattle with impunity in *jotes* bordering on the forest boundary. The cultivators are helpless against them. They are not empowered to kill them without a license. I am told a person was fined about Rs. 50 for the offence of his dogs killing without his knowledge, a forest deer found on his own paddy field spoiling the crop. The obvious consequence is that such plots are left uncultivated and are in course of time resumed by Government for non-payment of rent and the next step is that they are handed over to the Forest Department.

In the Duars many *danga* lands have also turned barren for want of irrigation. Formerly the cultivators would irrigate by the process of cutting irrigation ditches or Jampai as they are called at their own expense and from the hill rivers. But the magic word "license" is in force now. Permission has to be obtained from the Deputy Conservator and from the Divisional Forest Officer if the river runs through the forest area. In khas mahals no rent is charged for this purpose but in the forest are a fee of Rs. 5 to Rs. 75 is the annual charge for each Jampai. Many *jotedars* have applied to the Divisional Forest Officer to reduce the charge but in vain. Even on payment of this high charge cultivators are sometimes refused permission. Satali is a fairly big *taluk* where the source of a Jampai situated within the forest area has been silted up by sand. The cultivators have been applying alternately to the Deputy Conservator and the Divisional Forest Officer. They are still paying the annual charge of Rs. 58 in place of Rs. 4, the rate at which they had been paying a few years ago for the privilege of a Jampai. But they have been knocking in vain for the permit. As a result about 2,500 acres of land are deprived of water and lying fallow for the last three years.

Forced labour is the order of the day in the forests and often enough these "begar" labour gets no payment at all. The Duars is interspersed with forests, and plots under cultivation. Ryots have to

take their cattle but for such transport they have to pay at one anna per head of cattle if they use forest roads. In Madarihat they are wiser, I mean the Government because they charge a consolidated fee of Re. 1 per head of cattle per year for use of the Torsa river for its water. The Forest Department is thus powerful not only on solid land but also on water its possession is supreme and money must be paid for privileges which are considered to be elementary or fundamental rights in every civilised country. In some portions of the country, the only watering places fall within the forest area. There is no other alternative for the people; they have to take *pattahs* on payment of Re. 1 per year per cattle or allow them to die of thirst.

I want you, Mr. Speaker, to realise the condition of this forest area. Milk and butter had been cheap and available in abundance in the Duars; cattle could feed without difficulty; the grazing blocks were amply provided for. The position now is entirelfy different; those blocks have been mostly taken over by the Forest Department, and the Department in its wisdom has either prohibited grazing or permitted it on payment of heavy fees. To come to particulars let us take the case of the Diana Range; it is not a *sal* forest, it does not contain many valuable trees; the range is grassy and includes a large number of grazing blocks. There has been no objection to Bustewallas grazing their cattle on payment of usual fees, but during the last few years, such grazing has been practically stopped except in the case of European garden cattle. Any other cattle found entering or straying into the forest range (I must tell that there is no fencing to protect the range probably under the idea that cattle would nose it guided by their instinct) is straightaway sent to the pound which means, its owner has to trudge along sometimes a dozen miles or more to the Range Office and pay a fine from Re. 1-8 to Rs. 3, over and above the usual pound fee. Not only cattle, but human beings also, meet with the same treatment for careless trespass while fishing on a river, the fine is to the amount of Rs. 5. The total amount in the form of fines, etc., for illicit grazing and illicit fishing, etc., in 1935-36 was as high a figure as Rs. 27,500 in Jalpaiguri district alone.

(The member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Maulana MD. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI:** I beg to move that the demand under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100.

মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহোদয় Forest বিভাগের ব্যয়ের জন্য ১২ লক্ষ ৪৫ হাজার টাকা sanction চাহিয়াছেন। তাহার মধ্যে আমি 100 Rs. cut এর প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত করিয়াছি। এবং এই প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত করিয়াছি Forest বিভাগের অত্যাচার, অনাচার আর অবিচারের প্রতিবাদকল্পে। দেশে একটা প্রবাদ আছে—কাণা হাটে না খানার কাছ দিয়ে। কিন্তু Forest বিভাগের অনাচার, অত্যাচার এই প্রবাদ বাক্যকে হারাইয়া দিয়াছে। Forest বিভাগের দ্বারা দিবা দ্বিপ্রহরে, প্রত্যহ, এমন কি প্রত্যেক ঘণ্টায় যে সকল অনাচার, জনসাধারণের প্রতি হইতেছে তাহা যদি House এর member মহোদয়গণ দেখিতেন বা শুনিতেন

সুযোগ পাইতেন তাহা হইলে মনে করিতেন বর্ত্তমান যুগে এই Civilised Country তে Civilized Government এর অধীনে এই রকম ঘটনা ছাড়া পৃথিবীর এক অপূর্ব্ব ব্যাপার। এই Assembly র Session আরম্ভ হবার একমাস পূর্বে আমি চট্টগ্রাম district এর সাতকানিয়ার পদুয়া গ্রামে গিয়াছিলাম। সেখানে একজন সাধু ফকির আছেন; তাঁহার নিকট প্রত্যহ শত শত লোক যাইয়া থাকে। আমিও সেখানে গিয়াছিলাম। দেশের লোক যখন জানিতে পারিল যে Assembly র (মাটে কাউন্সিলের) একজন মেম্বর আসিয়াছেন তখন চারি দিক হইতে লোকসকল আসিয়া আমাকে ঘিরিয়া ধরিল, আমাকে তাহাদের দুঃখের কাহিণী শুনাতে লাগিল। মূল Forest হইতে তিন মাইল দূরে সেই গ্রাম অবস্থিত। Forest এর সঙ্গে তাদের কোন সম্পর্ক নাই। তাহাদের সব নিজেদের তালুকের জমি না হয় তো জমিদারের নিকট হইতে বন্দোবস্ত লওয়া জোত; Forest এর ত্রিসীমানায়ও তাহারা যায় না। কিন্তু Forest বিভাগের কর্ম্মচারীরা শুধু পয়সা আদায় করিবার জন্য, দীনদরিদ্র লোকদিগকে নিষ্পেষিত করিবার জন্য তাহাদের বাড়ী, ভিটার ছাগল, গরু লইয়া টানাটানি করে। গ্রামের কতকগুলি গুণ্ডা তাহাদের হাতে আছে, তাহাদের সাহায্যে জবরদস্তি করিয়া গ্রামের যে কোন লোকের গরু লইয়া থানায় দেয়। কেননা গোরু নাকি Forest এ গিয়াছিল। ফরেষ্ট হইতে তিন মাইল দূরে তাহাদের নিজেদের জমিতে গরু চরিবে—তাহাও ধরিয়া থানায় লইয়া যাইবে। এরূপ অবস্থায় দীনদরিদ্র কৃষকের বাঁচিয়া থাকার আর উপায় কি? হাতে দুচার টাকা যাহা থাকে তাই তাহাদের দিয়া গরু ছাড়াইয়া লইয়া আসে। তাহাদের নিজের জমির বাঁশ বা কাঠ কাটিবার উপায় নাই। অমনি Forest বিভাগের লোক বলিয়া উঠে "তোমরা আমাদের Forest হইতে একাঠ বা বাঁশ কাটিয়াছ।" অপরাধ স্বীকার করিলে তো ১০৲ জরিমানা দিয়া রক্ষা। অস্বীকার করিলে ২০।২৫।৫০৲ টাকা জরিমানা দিতে হয়। এইরকম দুটা একটা case নয়; বহু case হইয়া থাকে। আমি শুনিয়াছিলাম যে Forest বিভাগের ভারপ্রাপ্ত মন্ত্রী মহোদয় চট্টগ্রামে যাইবেন, আমি তাঁহাকে জঙ্গলপদুয়া, মরিয়মনগর এবং সরপভাটা গ্রামে যাইয়া সেই গ্রাম তিনটীর অবস্থা পরিদর্শন করিবার জন্য অনুরোধ করিয়াছিলাম। কিন্তু তিনি উত্তর দিয়াছিলেন—"আমি এখন যাইতে পারিতেছি না, যখন আমি যাইব তখন আপনাকে জানাইব"। কথা হইতেছে এই যে সেখানকার লোকে এখন পুলিশের অত্যাচারের কথা ভুলিয়া গিয়াছে, থানার অত্যাচারের বদলে এখন কেবল তাহারা Forest এর অত্যাচারের কথাই দিনরাত ভাবিতেছে।

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Gupta, can you finish in three minutes time?

**Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir. I rise on this occasion not to discuss the budget but to make certain suggestions to Government, so that they may earn a decent income. In the past, the policy of the Government was to supply sleepers to the railway running in Bengal from the Bengal forests. But since the introduction of the India Stores Department, that control has been transferred to the India Government. The result is that the railway running in Bengal are not taking out sleepers but are getting their supplies from the Punjab and other places. Consequently, the Forest Department in Bengal is losing much income. And unemployment among carpenters saw-men, cart-men and khalasis is increasing daily, because there is no work in the forests regarding manufacturing of sleepers. So I suggest to this Government to move the Government of India to rule that so long as the Bengal Forests can supply the sleepers, the railways running in Bengal must take their supplies from this province, and I hope that this will not only increase the income of the

Bengal Government, Forest Department, but at the same time it will reduce the unemployment in Bengal.

**Al-Haj Maulana Dr. SANAULLAH:** I rise to endorse all the statements made by Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmed and Maulana Md. Mahiruzzaman Islamabadi, regarding the maladministration of the Forest Department in the district of Chittagong. Though the entire district has been protesting in one voice, even occasionally has been dragged to desparation for some years past we have not as yet been able to get any redress from the Minister in charge of the Forest Department. The Hon'ble Minister was pleased to inform me that he was gracious enough simply to issue in Bengali some cards of the Department which were formerly used to be issued in English. The poor peasants living in the forest area are ignorant and illiterate. Taking advantage of their illiteracy the Forest Guards who are ill paid and lowly paid, oppress them with these English Cards. The illiterate people cannot find a single man in the whole village who could read English, taking advantage of this, the Forests Guards go to the villagers and tell them "here you are, here is the summons for you to take, you are arrested, you are to appear before the Forest Officer". The people, because they do not know English, have to bow down before the oppressing Forest Guards. As ordered by the Forest Guards, they cannot afford to go to the distant district headquarters to appear before the Magistrate, because to do so the poor people will have to spend for conveyance and legal fee, etc., 10 to 15 rupees. So they say to Forest Guards "you can take some money, but do not harass us." In this way they exact 4 to 5 rupees from each one of them. By so doing they are reducing the revenues of the Government and filling their own pockets. In this respect I want to cite a few instances:

One Forest Guard of Narayanhat Centre used to take milk from a poor cultivator and did not pay anything at all when asked for money and not only that, the site of Narayanhat forest Bunglow belonging to some poor people was forcibly acquired by them and this information was elicited by me in reply to my question, from the Department who admitted it. Up till now, they have not paid the money. And as there is no Engineering Department attached to the Forest Department, they get their works done by the forced labour of the local people. We wanted protection for poor people and Government have given protection to the rhinoceroses at the cost of the peasants.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** Sir, Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmed spoke about the forest policy and the oppression by the Forest Guards which is going on in Chittagong. Well, Sir

it is only in 1925, as I said, that this was handed over to the Forest Department by the khas mahal with a view to get better management of the forest. The idea was to preserve these forests for the benefit of the local people and he thinks now that these forests can well be handed over to the khas mahal again. I do not realise the meaning of it when he says that there is a technical department and the technical department knows how to manage the forests and how to preserve them and help to serve the local people.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** What is the technical question in these khasmahal forests?

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Don't put questions? They will be in difficulty and their office will crack.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** Is there any timber which is extracted from the khasmahal?

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** Sir, I think the Khan Bahadur cannot deny that there is no technical question.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** I emphatically deny that there is no technical aspect.

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** But these forests are there for the purpose of the benefit of the local people and that if these forests are badly managed, there will be no forest left—(Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: For you to administer.)

Mr. Khagendra Nath Das Gupta spoke about the Dooars where he alleged that *jotes* have been acquired for the purpose of afforestation, and that great hardship has been caused to the people of the locality. But can he honestly say that the people have so far suffered as regards dearth of cultivable lands? He also referred to grazing lands and said that grazing lands are fast disappearing. But as far as I know, this is not correct.

Dr. Sanaullah and Maulana Maniruzzaman Islamabadi spoke about the oppression of the Forest Department, but so far I have not heard from these hon'ble gentlemen of any specific case of oppression. If any specific case of oppression is brought to my notice, I shall be quite prepared to enquire into the matter.

Sir, I do not want to say much about these cut motions as I feel that there is not much substance behind them. I hope that, in view of the assurances that I have given, the hon'ble members will be pleased to see their way to withdraw their motions and not to press them to a division.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, I would not have intervened in this debate had it not been for the fact that I had the advantage of discussing the whole policy of Forest administration, especially as regards the district of Chittagong, with my esteemed friend Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmad. I am grateful, Sir, for the very valuable suggestions that he has offered, and I can at once assure him and this House that the present Government accept the principle that these forests exist for the benefit of the cultivators and not the cultivators for the benefit of the forests. (Cries of "Hear, hear"). That principle, Sir, we admit and we are going to implement it to the fullest extent in our policy of forest administration.

Now, Sir, there are three points which have been raised, and to which I wish to refer very briefly because it is expected that Government will announce a policy with regard to these three points.

The first point relates to the control of these forests, i.e., whether they should be controlled by the khas mahal as before or whether they should be controlled by the Forest Department. I am not going, Sir, to stand on technicalities. It may be that the khas mahal administration is slacker and therefore more popular, or it may be that the Forest Department has not been able to administer the Department to the satisfaction of the local people. I do not think it necessary to go into all these questions, but I will say this that we have had this point closely examined by a Special Officer, Mr. Stuart, who has submitted a report. That report has got to be considered, and I promise that I will consider the report of Mr. Stuart personally and will place it before the Cabinet with my own views on it. I hope that this will satisfy my friend Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmad. Further I can assure the House that I shall place this matter before the Cabinet as easily as possible.

As regards the revision of rates, Sir, I submit to this House that is a matter which has got to be considered in consultation with the Revenue Department as well as the Forest Department, and, speaking personally, I do consider these rates to be abnormally high, and I think that there is considerable room for reduction without detriment to the public revenues. If Government have not to suffer any appreciable loss of revenue, I do not see any reason why relief should not be given to the cultivators in the matter of lowering the rates.

Now, Sir, as regards prosecutions that is a very difficult matter to deal with. When officers of the Forest Department have to deal with all kinds of hindrances, they may be upset and led to do things which they would not ordinarily do under normal circumstances. It is quite likely that oppressions are committed more frequently in some areas as compared with others. I admit that needless prosecutions do exist, but I hope that the entire Department will not be condemned

because one or two officers may not have acted as they should have done. In any case, Sir, so far as these petty prosecutions are concerned, we shall take care that they cease to exist and that the liberties of the people are not interfered with unnecessarily.

Sir, I hope that my friends Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmad and Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri will be satisfied with what I have said. So far as the present policy of the Forest Department is concerned, and which I have enunciated very briefly, I can assure the House that Government will see to it that it is acted upon liberally. I wish the House to remember that this Department was so long administered as a Reserved Department of Government, and the policy of the Bengal Government was more or less framed under the direction of the Government of India. At the present moment, we are fully free from the control of the Government of India, but we have not yet been able to tackle all the problems relating to Forest administration in the manner we want to do. The question of forest administration, Sir, is in many respects a very complicated one. On the one hand, forests are a fruitful source of revenue if they are properly managed. On the other hand, we cannot overlook the fact that the cultivators put forward certain claims which they think to be only natural. All these conflicting claims have got to be adjusted, and all that we can do to-day is to promise that, so far as we are concerned, we shall go thoroughly into the question of forest administration. The Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest Department will examine all questions that have been raised in to-day's debate as well as other questions of major importance and I will help him in his work, and I hope that we shall be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problems that beset the administration of forests.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU:** Was not this promise made last year also?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** No. Last year we promised that a committee would be appointed to go into the question of disforestation of certain districts in West Bengal, such as, Burdwan, Bankura, Birbhum—

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** But that relates to afforestation?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Yes, that is true, but we have done nothing so far as the Eastern Bengal districts are concerned.

The most satisfactory course would be for the Hon'ble Minister in charge to look into the question thoroughly, and, as I have already said, I will help him, if necessary. We have however, this advantage that Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmed, Maulana Manirussaman

Islamabadi, and Dr. Sanaullah know a lot about local conditions and problems, and I am quite sure that with their help there will be no difficulty at arriving at a satisfactory solution of the whole problem. More than this at the present moment it is not possible for me to say, nor do I think, Sir, that you will give me the time to discuss the matter more fully.

I hope, Sir, that, in view of what I have said, none of these motions will be pressed to a division.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** In view of the assurances given by the Hon'ble Chief Minister——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No speech, please.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** No, Sir, I am not going to make any speech. I appreciate that until recently the forest policy of the Bengal Government was dictated to a certain extent by the Government of India, but since the Hon'ble Chief Minister has promised to look into the whole question thoroughly and personally, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad that the demand under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100 was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri that the demand under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100 was put and lost.

The motion of Maualna Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi that the demand under the head "10—Forests" be reduced by Rs. 100 was put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut that a sum of Rs. 12,45,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "10—Forests" was then put and agreed to.

**"37—Education—Anglo-Indian and European."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 11,24,800 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—Anglo-Indian and European."

**Mr. W. C. WORDSWORTH:** We now come to the half hour that is annually allotted for attention to the education of an important section of the community, and it would not be seemly if the opportunity were entirely neglected. I have been asked to say a few words. They will be few. With your permission I shall not move the motion

that stands against my name, but shall speak on the original motion. For I have no complaints to make against Government. I speak for three purposes, to thank, to expound, to request.

I would begin by thanking the Finance Minister who has discharged a formal and statutory obligation under the Constitution by bringing up the budget of this Department to the figure prescribed by the Government of India Act, as is explained in this Red Book. For discharging his formal and statutory obligation I offer him on behalf of the schools the proper amount of formal and statutory gratitude. The Constitution does not insist on the Finance Minister's stopping at the prescribed minimum. If next year he finds it convenient and possible to go beyond that figure there will be gratitude that is neither formal nor statutory.

Next I would thank the Premier who as head of the Education Department and as Chairman of the Provincial Board that looks after these schools has arduous duties to perform. I thank also the Churches and missionary bodies of many countries without whose help there would be hardly any education for this community. And finally I would thank the teachers for their devoted service.

I now come to exposition. The proper title of this Department is the Department of Anglo-Indian and European Education, but the title of the schools is European schools and the officer in charge is the Inspector of European Schools. This is an amusing inconsistency in a sphere where there is little amusing, where nearly everything is consistently grim. These schools, called European schools, are schools for Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Indians, Parsis, Jews, Armenians, Chinese; in this department the word European receives its richest definition. I may remind you that about 25 per cent. of the boys and girls in many of these schools are Indian boys and girls and some of the teachers are Indians. Children and teachers who are Indians are welcomed; they meet with no difficulties or hostility. European education, that is the education of European children, must anywhere be a separate thing in a non-European country just because it derives much of its inspiration and impulse from the traditions of European culture and from the Christian faith. That must be accepted as a fundamental consideration. But here in Bengal these schools are on friendly terms with their environment.

I have told you that about 25 per cent. of the children who attend these schools are Indians. Many of the schools work under the University of Calcutta. I am asked to say a word of gratitude to the University for its generosity to them in its regulations and practice, and to the Vice-Chancellor in person for the assistance and interest that he always has for them.

Finally, I beg. What I beg is the good will of all Indians towards this department and these schools. They are now under an Indian, our Premier; he is advised in doing this part of his work by a board

of a dozen men and women, of whom besides himself four are members of this Assembly; the Vice-Chancellor, one member of the European group, two of the Anglo-Indian group. I hope therefore that the Assembly will appreciate that these schools are not something alien, not something contrary to or indifferent to the general welfare of the province, but that their welfare and their happiness is a valuable contribution to the welfare and happiness of Bengal.

The other day the Minister of Education was very generous towards a request for five lakhs and a special officer for the education of one poor community. If that generous spirit still endures in him, may I put forward a similar request on behalf of the education of another poor community? These schools would delight in five lakhs and a special officer. Or if it is difficult to give both they would gladly surrender the special officer in return for say another lakh, because they have an admirable Inspector of European Schools.

May I say one word about what was being said when I came into the House yesterday? A member was asking a Minister whether he was aware that all Europeans in Bengal are fabulously wealthy. With sorrow I inform the House that I am acquainted with one exception. But anything given to these schools does not go even into the pockets of that one exception. When we use the word 'European' in connection with these schools we do not speak of those Europeans who come to this country to work and someday go home again; who, however long they may be in this country, still inevitably and naturally think of Britain as their home. The Europeans here, in this department, as I have told you, are Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Chinese, Parsis, Armenians, Jews. The Europeans among them are the children of Europeans who perhaps have never seen the land from which I come, perhaps are sons of families who for generations have not seen Europe.

I thank all for the help you give this department. And once again I ask the good will of all Indians towards our European schools.

(The House was then adjourned for 15 minutes.)

*(After adjournment.)*

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, in the speech delivered by my friend Mr. Wordsworth there was no attack and therefore I do not think that I am required to put up any defence. I entirely agree with Mr. Wordsworth that the Statutory Committee for advising on European and Anglo-Indian education has been doing splendid work suggesting methods for the improvement of education and for attending to the needs of these two communities from time to time in a manner suitable to the requirements of those communities. There is only one point in his speech to which I wish to refer and that very briefly, i.e., with regard to the education of the Anglo-Indian

community. I am prepared to admit that the Anglo-Indian community deserves some special treatment because as a community the Anglo-Indians are not very wealthy and the education of their children is hampered by various considerations over which they have got no control. Up to the present moment no specific grievance has been put forward and the Inspector of European and Anglo-Indian Education, Dr. Thomas, who is very much vigilant, up to now pointed out no defect in the system. If and when any complaint is received and suggestions are put forward, I am sure the Board will consider those suggestions and recommend such action as may be thought necessary for the consideration of Government. I thank Mr. Wordsworth who unfortunately is not present here for having brought his motion in order to emphasise the good work that is being done by the Board in its advisory capacity and by the Inspector who is especially entrusted with the task of looking after these special institutions and I hope that with constant co-operation between the Board of Control of Anglo-Indian Education and Government the two communities will receive the fullest measure of attention in regard to the education of their children.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq that a sum of Rs. 11,24,800 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—Anglo-Indian and European" was then put and agreed to.

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 15,61,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Industries".

**Mrs. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR :** মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, আমি এই ছাটাই প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত কোরছি।

I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 15,61,000 for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Industries" be reduced by Rs. 100, for failure to lay down a scheme for all-round and systematic development of cottage and small industries.

মাননীয় শিল্প বিভাগের মন্ত্রী বাহাদুরের ইং ১৯৩৮ লিখিত Statement পাঠ কোরে তাঁর গত বৎসরের Staement এর সঙ্গে তুলনা কোরে দেখা গেল কেবলই বাকচাতুর্য্য। তিনি পঞ্চ বছরের Scheme কোরে আমাদের অভাব পূরণ কোরবেন আশা দিয়েছিলেন। এবং তাঁর ৬টা দফার মধ্যে ছোট ছোট কুটীর শিল্পের ( Cottage Industry ) উন্নতি সাধনকেই মুখ্য স্থান দেওয়ার আশা দিয়েছিলেন, কিন্তু যদিও শিল্প বিভাগের শিক্ষার জন্য বরাদ্দ ২ লক্ষ ৭ হাজার টাকা; উন্নতি বা প্রসারকল্পে তার জন্য ১ লক্ষ ১৬ হাজারের বেশী ব্যবস্থা তার মধ্যে কুটীর শিল্পের উন্নতি সাধনের প্রত্যক্ষভাবে কিছু করাত হয়ই নাই বরং ব্যয় সংক্ষেপের বরাদ্দ মধ্যে স্থান পেয়েছে কুটীর শিল্প। তাঁতের কাজের উন্নতির বিশেষ ব্যবস্থার জন্য গত বৎসর ছিল ২,৪০০৲ টাকা; এবারও তাই আছে। কিন্তু বস্ত্রবয়ন শিল্প বিষয়ক বাজেটে গত বৎসরে ছিল একচল্লিশ হাজার টাকা তার স্থলে আগামী বৎসরে বাজেটে বরাদ্দ হয়েছে ২২,০০০৲ টাকা অর্থাৎ প্রায় অর্দ্ধেকের চেয়েও কম।

বগুড়া ও ত্রিপুরার বয়ন শিল্প শিক্ষার স্কুল প্রতিষ্ঠানের বাবদ জন্য ৭ হাজার টাকা ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে তা বাদ দিলেও এই সম্পর্কে ১২ হাজার টাকা ব্যয় সংক্ষেপ করা হয়েছে, কিন্তু তথাপি মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় Statement এ বারবার বোলছেন তিনি উন্নতির পথে আশানুরূপ অগ্রসর হোচ্ছেন।

গত ১৯১৪ সালে জার্ম্মানী ও ফরাসী যুদ্ধে ফরাসীরা খবর দিতেন তাঁহারা ক্রমেই অগ্রসর হোচ্ছেন, তার কিছুদিন পর দেখা গেল তাঁরা পিছনের দিকে অগ্রসর হোচ্ছেন এবং জার্ম্মেনী ছোট্ট ছোট্ট তে প্যারিস আক্রমণ কোরে বোসেছে।

সেরূপ শিল্প মন্ত্রী বাহাদুরের ৫ বৎসরের স্কীমে যে ৮ মাসে ১২ হাজারের বরাদ্দ কোরেছেন, এইভাবে চোল্লে বক্রী কয় বৎসরে পেঁছুতে যে পারবেন সে বিষয়ে সন্দেহনাই।

বস্ত্র শিল্পই সমাজের মুখ্য শিল্প। কুটীর সাহায্যেই তাহার সমস্যা সমাধান হওয়া সৃষ্টির স্বাভাবিক প্রণালী। মানুষ সৃষ্টি করে না, মানুষ করে সংগ্রহ ও শৃঙ্খলা।

জীবমাত্রেই জন্মের সঙ্গে আর একটা ধ্রুব সত্য পায়; ইহা মৃত্যু। সৃষ্টির নিয়মে মৃত্যু, জন্মমাত্রই জীবকে আক্রমন করতে থাকে। জন্ম হইতে মৃত্যু পর্য্যন্ত সময় জীবকে মৃত্যুর সঙ্গে প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা করেও বাঁচতে হয়। তাহার জন্য প্রয়োজন খাওয়া ও পরা। জন্মের ৬ মাস পূর্ব্ব হ'তে এই খাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা সৃষ্টিতে যথাস্থানে থাকে। প্রথমতঃ পরিমিতভাবে এক বৎসরের পরিমাণে থাকে গর্ভধারিণী মায়ের স্তনে। তৎপর অপরিমিতভাবে থাকে জননী জন্মভূমির বক্ষে। জন্মভূমির বক্ষ হ'তে খাওয়া ও পরার উপাদান সংগ্রহ করার পদ্ধতির নামই শিল্প। এইজন্য মানুষ পেয়েছে নিজকে আর পেয়েছে এক প্রাতঃকাল হ'তে আর এক প্রাতঃকাল পর্য্যন্ত ২৪ ঘন্টা সময় এবং সৃষ্টি সৌর জগত।

মানুষ যদি বুদ্ধি ও শক্তির সাহায্যে সময়ের সদ্ব্যবহার ক'রে সৃষ্টি হো'তে প্রয়োজনীয় জিনিষগুলি সংগ্রহ কো'রে নিতে পারে তবে তার অভাব থাকতে পারে না।

জনে জনে, গৃহে গৃহে, সংগ্রহের যে পদ্ধতি তাই কুটীরশিল্প এবং তাই সৃষ্টির স্বভাবসিদ্ধ পদ্ধতি। এই পদ্ধতির ব্যতিক্রম করেছে যন্ত্রশিল্প। যন্ত্রশিল্পের সাহায্যে একে অপরকে বেকার করে নিজে প্রভূত অর্থ সংগ্রহ করে। অতএব কুটীরশিল্পের প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা যন্ত্রশিল্পের সঙ্গে।

মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় তাঁর Statement এ প্রথমেই উল্লেখ কোরেছেন " Agricultural is seasonal and, thus, the agriculturist has several months of enforced idleness." ("কৃষিকর্ম্ম সাময়িক। অতএব কৃষক কয়েক মাস অলস বেকার থাকতে বাধ্য")। সুতরাং এই অলসতা বা বেকার সমস্যার প্রতিকার কুটীরশিল্প। কুটীরশিল্পের মধ্যে বস্ত্রবয়নশিল্পই প্রধান। আমাদের দেশের গভর্ণমেন্ট এই দেশব্যাপী বস্ত্রবয়নশিল্পের উন্নতি বা উৎকর্ষ বিষয়ে সম্পূর্ণ উদাসীন।

মাদ্রাজ গভর্ণমেন্ট তাঁতের কাপড়ের উন্নতির জন্য নূতন বস্ত্র বিষয়ক আইন লিপিবদ্ধ করেছেন। আমাদের গভর্ণমেন্ট সেবিষয়ে কাল্পনাও করতে পারেন না। শুধু তাঁতের কাপড়ের নয়, খদ্দরের প্রসার জন্য মাদ্রাজ গভর্ণমেন্ট ২ লক্ষ টাকার বরাদ্দ করেছেন। প্রস্তাবে খদ্দরের প্রতি পজের উপর একআনা সরকারী সাহায্যের ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে। আমাদের ও তাঁদের মধ্যে তফাত তাঁদের ঢাক বাজে কম, কাজে বেশী, আর আমাদের ঢাক বাজে বেশী, কাজে শূন্য। কেবল শূন্য নয় বিপরীত কুটীর শিল্পের খাতে ব্যয় কর্ত্তন আর যন্ত্রশিল্পের জন্য শ্রীরামপুরে উইভিং কলেজে কলের সাহায্যে শিক্ষার জন্য ১৮ হাজার টাকা এবং তৎসঙ্গে পাট বুনার জন্য শক্তি-চালিত যন্ত্রের ব্যবস্থা হো'চ্ছে। আমাদের মন্ত্রী বাহাদুর তাই রোগ সাব্যস্ত করলেন, কৃষির অবসরে বেকার আর বাজেটে বরাদ্দ করলেন শক্তির আবিস্কার আর বিদ্যুৎ শক্তির জন্য ব্যবস্থা প্রণালী ও যন্ত্রশিল্পের উন্নতির জন্য চেষ্টা অর্থাৎ বেকার বুদ্ধির চেষ্টা।

মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের Statement এর প্রত্যেকটি বিষয় আলোচনা করার সময় আমি পাব না; তবে তার Statement এর ধারা সম্পূর্ণ কুটীরশিল্পের প্রতিকূল। আমি সংক্ষেপে এই বোলতে

পল্লির প্রত্যেক গ্রামের ৮ বৎসর হ'তে ৬০ বছর পর্য্যন্ত পুরুষ ও স্ত্রী সকলের শ্রম সাহায্যে গ্রামের স্বাস্থ্যের ও কৃষিজাত জিনিষগুলিকে ব্যবস্থার উপযোগী কো'রে অপব্যয় বন্ধ করবার উপায় উদ্ভাবন করার কার্য্য করলে সকল সমস্যার সমাধান হ'তে পারে। বর্ত্তমানে বাংলা দেশে খাওয়া পরার যে জিনিষ প্রয়োজন তাতে ২৩।২৪ প্রকার জিনিষ অনায়াসে গ্রামে প্রস্তুত হতে পারে। তাহা বর্ত্তমান বাজেটে যে টাকার পরিমাণ বরাদ্দ আছে তাহা দ্বারাই হতে পারে। তাঁদের প্রথম কার্য্য হওয়া উচিত; পুরাতন শিল্প কেন্দ্রগুলি, যাহা এখনও প্রাণরক্ষা ক'রে আছে তার রক্ষা করা। আজ ১২।১৪ দিন হইল পত্রিকায় দেখলাম শান্তিপুরের ২।০টী চিনির কারখানার মধ্যে ১টী বন্ধ হয়ে গ্যাছে। বস্ত্রীগুলিও যায় যায়।

অতএব—

(১) কাপড়,

(২) রেশম,

(৩) পিতল, কাঁসা,

(৪) কাগজ,

(৫) পাটের প্রস্তুত জিনিষ,

(৬) কাগজ প্রস্তুত

ইত্যাদি নানাস্থানে যেসকল শিল্প কেন্দ্র আছে তাহা রক্ষা করা; তৎপর উন্নতি বিধান।

ঢাকায় মন্ত্রী বাহাদুরের সিংহ দরজার সম্মুখে যে শাঁখার শিল্প কেন্দ্র শাঁখারিপাড়া তার অবস্থাও কি মন্ত্রী বাহাদুরকে কমিশন করে জানতে হবে। তারাও যে ক্রমে ধ্বংশের পথে এগোচ্ছে। আমাদের আর একটি কুটীরশিল্প রেশমের কাজ তিনজন ডিপুটী ডাইরেক্টর এবং বাৎসরিক ১॥০ লক্ষ টাকা ব্যয় সত্ত্বেও আজ পর্য্যন্ত আমাদের গুটি নিরোগ হলো না এবং রেশমের রিলিং কাজে উৎকর্ষ সাধিত হলো না। বর্ত্তমান বাজেটে বহরমপুর ইনষ্টিটিউটে পুনর্গঠনের জন্য ৬১ হাজার টাকা বরাদ্দ, আরও কয়জন সুপারেনটেণ্ডেন্ট, ইত্যাদি নিযুক্ত হ'য়ে রেশম শিল্পকে আরও কতদূর দুর্দ্দশার পথে অগ্রসর ক'রে দেবেন জানি না।

বাজেটে Industrial intelligence branch এর পরিকল্পনা দেখা যায়। এতে বর্ত্তমান পদ্ধতিতে intelligence এর অভাব উপলব্ধি হয়েছে তাতে বেশ রসবোধ আছে। প্রথম intelligence branch অর্থে I. B. বোঝালে, বর্ত্তমান intelligence branch এর নাম কি হ'বে। আমার মত যেসকল member ইংরেজী কম জানেন তাঁদের বোঝবার জন্যে একটা সোজা নাম হওয়া দরকার। অতএব একটা intelligence branch আর একটা ediot branch হো'লে নামের সামঞ্জস্য থাকবে।

সভাপতি মহাশয়, মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল প্রত্যেক মোশনেই "No confidence" এর স্বপ্ন দেখে রজ্জুতে সর্পভ্রম করেন। তাঁরা সর্ব্বদাই শশঙ্কিত কখন মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল ধ্বংস হয়? তাঁদের জানা উচিত ঘরের খুটি শক্ত না হো'লে কেবল ভেজা অর্থাৎ তৈস দিয়ে বেশী দিন রাখা যায় না, তাতে সামান্য ঝড় থেকে বাঁচতে পারলেও কাল বৈশাখির প্রবল ঝাপটায় ধ্বসিয়া পরবেই।

গত ৮ মাস যাবৎ এই কক্ষে খোদা ও ভগবানের যে টানাটানি (টাগ অব ওয়ার) চলছিল গড় দূরে বোসে বেশ উপভোগ করছিলেন। কিন্তু তার ফলে বাংলার অবস্থা কি? জনকয়েক মাত্র Political Prisoners পেয়ে যুক্তপ্রদেশ ও বেহারের মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল সমগ্র পৃথিবীর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করতে সক্ষম হয়েছেন। আর ২॥ হাজার Political Prisoners পেয়েও Political Prisoner এর জন্মভূমি বাংলার মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী জগতের চ'ক্ষে হেয় হ'য়ে রলেন। কিন্তু সম্প্রতি ইউরোপে গড় যেরূপ কিচিত হয়েছেন এই Assembly র কক্ষেও খোদা, ভগবান ও

গত যোগাযে চঞ্চল হোয়ে উঠ্‌ছে মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী হয়ত একদিন দেখবেন তাঁদের পায়ের নীচের কাঠখানা অলক্ষিতে সরে গিয়েছে। ফাঁসীর আসামীর মত তাঁদের গলায় লেগে রইল কেবল ফাঁসী।

আর

"উঠবো মোরা, উঠবো মোরা
বিধির আদেশ বাণী"

চেয়ে দেখ ঐ বাংলার নবীন উষার তরুণ তপন আশার কিরণ ছড়িয়ে উদিত হোচ্ছে।

বঙ্গমাতা অভয় আশীর্বাদ ল'য়ে দুয়ারে ঘা দিচ্ছেন। সৌভাগ্যবান বাঙ্গালী এগিয়ে এসে সুযোগ গ্রহণ কর, নিমিত্তমাত্র হোয়ে সৌভাগ্য অর্জ্জন কর। নবতেজে নবীন বাংলার মিলিতশক্তি আকাশ বাতাস কাঁপিয়ে আবার গেয়ে উঠুক্।

"বন্দেমাতরম্।"

**MR. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir. Before I begin, I should like to thank the Hon'ble Minister once more for having taken us into his confidence and for circulating his plan of action among the members of the House. I hope the other Ministers will emulate his example.

The industrial progress of a country, Sir, depends on the successful operation of its 'Key' industries. The term 'Key' or 'Basic Industry', is generally used to denote an industry, the products of which supply the primary and essential raw materials to various other industries and particularly to such as are required for purposes of national defence. In every industrially progressive country 'Key' industries are recognised as the life blood of the nation and their establishment is encouraged with substantial state aid, either by the grant of Protection or by Subsidy. Protection may, in theory, be regarded as undesirable, as it might raise the cost of raw material in a number of industries. If that be the case, then, a bounty rather than a protective tariff may be the better way of assisting basic industries. This theoretical principle is not adopted uniformly. National Economics, rather than the economics of a particular industry, are the criterion and govern the decision. The selection of industries, as deserving of special consideration of Governments, is made with care and vigilance, for, almost every industry may demand special recognition on the plea that in some sense or the other, it is a basic industry.

Colossal sums are being spent feverishly by nations to maintain preparedness. While armaments are indispensable in warfare, the need for industrial preparedness and the maintenance of an efficient system of production is no less imperative. The last Great War was forced to a conclusion not so much by the power of arms as by the result of an effective blockade cutting out all supplies from outside. Wars for shedding blood take place at long intervals but an economic war is an everyday occurrence. Industrial preparedness presupposes industrial self-sufficiency, that is, the capacity to feed all the essential industries of the country with their basic raw material, for which substitutes are not known or cannot easily be found. Let alone,

Bengal, no part of India has yet attained this capacity and our dependance on foreign supplies, for working our chief industries, expose the country to grave and serious risks in peace no less than in war. There can be no difference of opinion as to the necessity of ending this state of things with the least possible delay, and the surest way to do it is to help establish in the land some of the principal key industries on a sufficiently large scale to meet normal demands with possibilities for expansion to cope with extraordinary demands as and when the need arises. During the last Great War when the sources of foreign supplies were cut off, all the important industries in India, were faced with a calamity the like of which had not been witnessed before. Their precarious position, the shaky foundations on which they had been built and the utter futility of efforts made for developing them on sound lines, without first establishing key industries, became prominently manifest as the time. Had the war protracted a little longer there was no doubt that the whole industrial structure of the country, in which millions and millions of rupees had been invested, would have collapsed.

It is now nearly two decades that the report of the Indian Industrial Commission, was published, and during this period considerable expansion of Indian industries has taken place. But reliable information, regarding the extent to which Indian industries have been made independent of foreign supplies, is still not available. In order, therefore, to see that the tragedy of war-time is not repeated in case foreign supplies are stopped, for some reason or the other, the consideration of ways and means for the establishment of key industries seems to be a matter of vital importance. The Commission, drew pointed attention to the "lengthy and ominous list of industries which, though their products are essential alike in peace and war, are lacking in this country".

India is reputed to be extraordinarily favoured in the matter of natural resources and possesses considerable facilities and scope for the manufacture, inside the country, of most of the important prime materials required by Indian industries. Nations less favoured than India, in this respect, have, however, built up their key industries, the State supplying the initiative and making up, by means of subsidies and safeguarding measures, what Nature had not blessed them with. The heavy chemical industries, the iron and steel and the non-ferrous metal industries, extract of oils from the coal, coal tar and mineral oil industries, are instances of key industries, the establishment of which cannot brook delay. On their operation the successful working of industries such as jute, tea, cotton textiles, paper, soap, glass and a variety of other industries, chiefly depend. Those who have given the matter their serious thought cannot resist the conclusion that the disappointingly slow pace of progress of industries in Bengal, is due, chiefly, to the absence of key industries. It is high time that an

investigation were made to examine in the first instance, the possibilities of development of such key industries for which the necessity is urgent and the resources of the province, adequate for the supply of their raw material or can be made so without any extraordinary effort.

In India, the policy of the Government, with regard to key industries, is still undefined. One need not go far to find the reason. It is explained in one word: "British Connexion". India must remain the market for the manufactured goods exported by England. If India began to manufacture, England would suffer and, therefore, she must not be allowed to emerge from a raw material producing country into an industrial one. The tragedy of it is that Japan runs away with the cream. Possessing climates of all the zones, India can become the [illegible] of the world and her sons happy but in the interest of British industries she must remain the hewer of wood and drawer of water among the nations of the world. The Fiscal Commission gave qualified support to the proposal that India's basic industries should be protected. The conditions, under which the Tariff Board works, are rigid and inelastic. The grant of protection to any industry seeking it, must satisfy (*i*) that India possesses natural advantages for the industry; (*ii*) that the industry must be one that is unlikely to develop without initial protection; and (*iii*) that the industry must be one which is likely, eventually, to be able to produce at a profit without governmental aid. So far, very few key industries have been able to obtain protection after satisfying these three conditions. The Steel and Iron Industry and the Cotton Textile Industry are probably the only two prominent basic industries that have been favoured with protection. Glass, minerals, heavy chemicals, lubricating oils and others, still remain outside the pale of protection. In Bengal, except for the meagre possibilities visualized by the State Aid to Industries Act and the Industrial Credit Syndicate, with both of which I am associated, nothing seems to have been done to make the province self-sufficient industrially. It may not be possible to isolate Bengal, for, the problem is Indiawide, but there is nothing to hinder my friend the Hon'ble Minister to sponsor the task and induce the Central Government to take up the problem seriously and in right earnest.

The investigation should be undertaken by a body of men who are in a position to take a sufficiently long view of the situation and are also able to bring to bear on it the benefits of their long experience and intimate knowledge of matters industrial. This Committee of Experts —scientific, technical, industrial and financial—should be free to co-opt special representatives as and when they examine particular lines of industries. The inquiry by the proposed Committee had better be preceded by the collation of existing information relating to the kind and quality of the resources which can be used as basic raw material for the industries, their source and availability, the possibilities of

development, whether they are utilised at present and, if so, to what extent, and whether the supply is capable of immediate extension without raising the cost of production, unduly. It will be for this Committee, which should consist of the Director of Geogical Surgey, the Director of Botanical Survey, Directors of Industries and the Heads of the Forest Department and others, to examine whether the conditions as disclosed by the preliminary survey are favourable for the establishment of key industries. In case, however, the existing state of things be found to be not suitable for the immediate launching of schemes for the establishment of key industries they will examine the factors that operate against such development and suggest ways and means for overcoming them. The Industrial Commission examined the question of founding such industries in India as would consume locally available material and they held that there was considerable scope for progress in this direction. In any scheme for the development of key industries, steps should be taken to minimise over-production and ruinous competition by measures such as the issuing of licenses and keeping a watchful eye over them constantly. The generation of cheap electricity all over the province, will also have to be studied carefully and with special reference to its utilization in the furtherance of the object in view.

I shall not waste the time of the House any longer. By safeguarding our key industries we shall be safeguarding the good fortune of our nation. With the new constitution, there is a new outlook in the land. I feel certain, Sir, that bankers, financers, industrialists and almost everyone who has the betterment of India at heart will come forward to assist the Government, if it will only make a move. The problem of key industries, if tackled properly will open up new avenues of co-operation between the Government and the Public. The opportunity which has presented itself to us now should not be missed. I hope my humble voice will not be a cry in the wilderness. I hope steps will be taken to encourage not only cottage industries, not only the existing other industries which bring some prosperity to Bengal but determined efforts will be made to establish these MOTHER industries wherever possible.

**Mr. F. T. HOMAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have read with greatest interest the statement issued by the Hon'ble Minister which has been circulated to this House. In my remarks I want to confine myself mainly to the heavy industries which the Hon'ble Minister terms as key industries. He refers in paragraph 16 of his statement to the supply of energy, either electrical or mechanical, in connection with key industries and I assume, he means that cheap supplies of energy must be made available. The problem to my mind goes much further than this. It is a combined one of availability of power and also

of ease of transport. We find most of the heavy industries concentrated in and around Calcutta, the reason being that near Calcutta and Howrah we have a wonderful waterway which gives us easy transport for the goods which are prepared in and around Calcutta. We have heard from the Hon'ble Ministers that they contemplate an electrical survey of the province and perhaps if cheap electrical power becomes more generally available and provided also that transport facilities are available, we might see developments whereby the industries will stretch further out into the province where at present they are practically undeveloped. It is gratifying to note that certain industries have been started within the last few years amongst which I would mention rubber factories, film studios,—we have now a thriving indigenous industry, manufacturing films for our local cinema houses—and also chemical works. They are, as far as I am aware, the main industries which have been started here during the last few years. Perhaps there is nothing very constructive in what I have put forward so far. But I can suggest to the Hon'ble Minister a line of development which, as far as I am aware, has not hitherto received any attention at all. We have agricultural products in this country growing in abundance. There are cocoanuts which grow in every corner of the country, mangoes which are cultivated to some extent but which are capable of much more improvement than at present, and also oranges. There is very little export of these products. At the same time, within the last few years, we have had a sugar industry started in India whereby nearly all the sugar used in this country is now produced here, whereas in the past nearly all of it imported. And I would suggest there is a possibility of preserving these products in the country so that we may export them, whereas at present they are not exported. The excess of exports over imports for the country as a whole amounts to approximately 77 crores of rupees, roughly Rs. 2 per head of the population of India, and I do suggest that it is possible to increase that by increasing our exports.

**Mr. SHAHEDALI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are two cut motions in my name, namely, the cut motions Nos. 283 and 284, but I move only motion No. 283, *i.e.*, the sum of Rs. 15,61,000 under the head "43—Industries—Industries" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise discussion on the inadequacy of "Fishery" grant.

At the outset Mr. Siddiqi showered thanks to the Hon'ble Minister for his issue of the statement. But, Sir, if that is the criterion of showering thanks, Mr. Siddiqi will get tired of showering thanks, as we expect many empty statements. At present, Sir, I reserve my thanks and they will be given to the Nawab Bahadur if he really does something to this Department. During this session there was one Bill, namely. the Rhinoceros Bill. As Rhinoceros is going to be

extinct that Bill was necessary. So also as some species of fish are going to be extinct in this Province, a Bill is necessary to the effect that people will not be allowed to catch some species of fish during some months of the year, and that will increase the number of fish. No other province in India is so much interwoven with river as the Province of Bengal and still the fisheries section of the Department of Industries is most neglected though it has a very bright future. Since the very beginning of the session we have heard that Government was going to start the fishery industry in right earnest, but from the statement issued by the Hon'ble Minister, it appears that he has not yet got the report from the expert, and he did not make any provision for this industry in the Budget this year. Are we to understand that the expert is not going to submit his report this year too?

Even, if we do not get an expert's opinion, we can do some work in this department. Take for example the pisciculture or the rearing of fishes. I do not know of the existence of any Fry Distributing centre in Bengal. In 1936 the Behar Government had 2,72,100 Fry Distributing centres throughout the whole province. Fishes can be reared both in the rivers as well as in the tanks. A great portion of unemployment of Bengal would be solved if the pisciculture would be introduced in this province. The art of drying fishes is most needed in the Province. Some people of Bengal take dried fishes where fresh fishes are not always available, and the dry fishes are imported from other provinces. Bengal abounds in fishes, specially Hilsha fishes. If scientifically this fish could be preserved, it can safely be exported to other countries, and the fate of fishermen would have been otherwise to-day. For lack of organisation of market for disposal of fishes, the business of selling fishes is not a profitable one. Government should take proper steps in this direction and for this no expert opinion is necessary.

There is no fishery institution in this Province, and as such the industry of fisheries was neglected. To avoid this difficulty a big Zamindar of Mehran in Matlab police-station within the district of Tipperah donated a very big sum towards the construction of a fishery school there. The Hon'ble Finance Minister also went to that place to lay the foundation stone. The building is now ready, but I do not know whether the Government will be coming up with a grant for the upkeep of the school for the education of boys of all communities. This place is situated in a place suitable for fishery researches surrounded by rivers.

Instead of wasting time for a comprehensive report of the expert from Madras, it is high time to start work in this industry.

With these words, Sir, I move my motion.

**Mr. SUKUMAR DUTTA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I like to associate myself with the cut motion moved by my friend Mrs. Mazumdar. In this connection I cannot too severely condemn the Industries Department for its utter inefficiency in tackling the vital problem of the development of village cottage industries. It is really disgraceful that the department has achieved nothing since its inception. We of course sometimes read in the papers of the splendid achievements of the Department, but later on only to be bewildered by contradictions from responsible agencies to learn that these achievements are more of a myth than a reality. I personally know three of these demonstration parties to which we give shelter in our municipality, and I can assure the House that not a single person materially benefited by these demonstration parties. The sooner this mock show is closed down the better.

The Department betrays absolute lack of imagination and a solid grasp of the village conditions. In this connection I want to draw the attention of the House to the grave charges against the Director of Industries by Mr. Justice Edgley in the election case of Sir Faroqui. May I ask the Government whether they have taken any steps on the findings of the Court, or the Director of the Industries enjoys the same protection from his present master as he did from his past one.

I would ask the Hon'ble Minister if he really wants to do something for the development of cottage industries he should not depend only on the advice of his arm-chair departmental experts, but he should take help from non-official agencies and try to formulate a scheme for the development of village industries of Bengal. I may mention herein that the non-official organization like the village Cottage Industries Association under the able guidance of Mahatmaji is doing splendid work in these respects. In Bengal Sjt. Satish Chandra Das Gupta, Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghose, and Mr. Profulla Chandra Sen are working on these lines, and we who are in touch with their activities know how the economic distress of this country can be removed to a certain extent even with the limited resources of a private organisation. Our Finance Minister often delights in making comparisons with the Congress Ministries of the other Provinces. Will he now come forward and enlighten the Hon'ble Minister of the Industries of the tremendous strides the other Congress Provinces have made in this direction! Even in Calcutta we have a marketing organization of the United Provinces Government. But alas! our Government is still sleeping over the matter a matter so important in the development of cottage industries.

I also draw the attention of the House to the desirability of making all store purchases of the Government through the Industries Department instead of through the Indian Stores Department. Mr. Azizul Haque, the present Speaker, made such proposals to the Government in his budget speech in 1930, but unfortunately Government has not taken any steps in the matter. These steps if taken will immensely

help to encourage the growth of the industries in this province. It would then be possible for the Government to give effect to a policy of purchasing the products of the indigenous industries of the province for all Government purposes. Paper, pen knives, pencils and numerous other stationeries are being manufactured in cottage industries, and the Government can very well make it a point to purchase the products of the cottage industries. A substantial portion of the cloth purchase can also be made from the handloom industries. In conclusion, I would ask the Government to take up seriously the reorganization of the village industries and try their best to ameliorate the condition of the masses (applause from the Congress Benches).

**Mr. M. FARHAD RAZA CHOWDHURY:** Sir, I rise to contribute something to the discussion generally, if it helps the industrialisation of the province in any way. Sir, I must be very brief as the time is too short. I must confess at the very outset that in spite of leaflets and statements issued for the general information from time to time, it is quite evident from the budget figures and proposals before the House, that the Industries Department has been still groping in the dark for a policy and therefore proposes now to undertake some schemes in desperately hopeless and aimless hurry. It goes to show that the Department has practically no settled and broad industrial outlook or any systematic progressive policy of its own. The inevitable result is that this thing or that thing is going to be undertaken so that the result of its experience may help to evolve a policy later on the presumption that it is solving unemployment. All these prove that in spite of ample provisions for money in the Budget the "Direction" is almost impotent.

Sir, about 20 years ago, the Industries Department was created, and to-day it stands there where it was then, without any notable achievement with any degree of appreciable result or success. The expert opinion of Mr. Hoogewerf in connection with cotton weaving industries at the Serampore Weaving Institute and that of Miss Cleghorn in respect of silks and Sericulture have not materialised yet. Model farms or Institutions as they exist for state policy in Germany, Japan or England have not been considered yet.

Sir, industrial budget estimate for 1938-39 provides for about 15½ lakhs of this sum, only the expenditure for the establishment of the department and travelling allowance of officers, etc., amounts to 10 lakhs. The stereotyped grants-in-aid and scholarships for technical education is about 3 lakhs, and I leave it to the members of this House to judge what can be expected of such a Department for the development of the industries with a meagre sum provided for the furtherance of industries for which only it exists.

Sir, the policy of the Department is entirely blind and in a sense barren. As for instance, it continues to give a subsidy to the extent of Rs. 18,000 a year to one and the only institution, viz., the Home Industries Association, for the last 20 years in spite of its Marketing Officers and so grand and expensive a staff which, curiously, has its duplicate for the same work in the Co-operative Department. Again, it has provided a sum of Rs. 50,000 for an Industrial and Commercial Museum—practically a counterpart or duplicate of what has already been done by the Calcutta Corporation. It is whispered that a particular man has also in view for this. These among others, can be singled out as the glaring instances which would strike even a casual observer. Unfortunately, in spite of all activities of the Department for the last 20 years with a huge staff at its back, an industrial handbook of any description has not yet come up for the benefit of the public in general.

Sir, taking all such circumstances into consideration, I suggest that there should be an Industrial Board to enquire into every detail of industrial schemes, not at the option of the Director of the Industries or his officers, but a Board to which it should be compulsory to refer every matter for recommendation and sanction before anything budgeted is definitely undertaken by the Department. All the proposals before us should, no further, be left to the officials or officers of the Department whose history of progressive realisation of schemes to their utter discredit consists practically of blank pages, for the last 20 years. This may only be remedied, if all the activities of the Department including the technical education, are fully considered by the proposed Industries Board which may consist of no less than 15 members and of whom, say, 10 may be members of the legislature representing the important groups and 5 may be representatives of industries, captains of industries or the like. The proposed Board may also have power to take in experts in specialised lines of industries for consultation, if necessary and when occasions would so demand. Otherwise, Sir, I am quite sure, money has a chance of being frittered away and schemes may be unsuccessful ultimately which none here with any sense of responsibility would undoubtedly like.

**Maulvi MD. HASANUZZAMAN:** Sir, what the Government has done for the development of the cottage industry—handloom weaving—up to date by the District and Peripatetic Weaving Schools we highly appreciate. But, I would like to point out one important drawback in the development of the hand-loom weaving as most of weavers use mill yarns 2s. 120s., i.e., about 30 million lbs. mill yarns are annually consumed by them and the difficulties in getting mill yarns are many. I touch only a few important points, viz.:—

(i) The village weavers are to purchase mill yarns from the third hand at higher price.

(ii) The mills sell the yarns at such a rate that weavers cannot make any reasonable profit out of it.

(iii) There being no Tantubai Samity in large numbers, the weavers suffer a great loss for sale and supply.

(iv) That there being about 1,92,440 weavers engaged in handloom industry, of whom 69 per cent. weave course counts and 31 per cent. fine counts, the necessity of establishing a spinning mill is most keenly felt to supply yarns on cheap rate.

I would, therefore, most respectfully urge on the Minister of Industries to take a note of it and try to establish a spinning mill, one in Chittagong at least, where cotton is available, and encourage the local people to establish it and Government should purchase half of the capitalised share to ensure the stability and good management of the company, and thus remove the long felt want of the poor weavers. The weavers of Zarwargong in the district of Chittagong, and Shahabazpur in the district of Pabna, are doing wonderful work in Bengal, for which the Director of Industries is to be congratulated.

As regards the jute industry, I beg to suggest to the House the desirability of training the jute grower in the methods of spinning and weaving gunny bags, and then start a spinning mill to supply jute yarn to the growers in exchange of raw jute and start sale and supply society for disposal of finished goods. I think if the sum of Rs. 1,50,000 allotted for jute Census and jute Restriction propaganda work, be spent for demonstration party, to teach jute spinning and weaving, it would be well spent for the development of the Cottage Industry and for supplementing the income of jute growers and to give them some subsidiary occupation during recess time.

**Maulvi IDRIS AHMED MIA:** মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, আমি লাহা ও রেশম শিল্প সম্বন্ধে কিছু বোলতে চাচ্ছি। এদুটি মালদহ জেলার প্রধান শিল্প। এই গালা শিল্পের দিকে আমাদের প্রত্যেকের একটু মন দেওয়া উচিত। আমাদের অনেক মেম্বরই গালা শিল্প অর্থাৎ লাহা থেকে তৈরী গ্রামোফোনের গান শুনে থাকেন। লাহা শিল্প একটা উপেক্ষা করবার জিনিষ নয়। বাংলার ভূমি রাজস্ব থেকে মোট যত টাকা গভর্ণমেন্টের আমদানি হয় এর চেয়ে অনেক বেশী টাকার লাহা মালদহ, মুর্শিদাবাদ প্রভৃতি জেলায় উৎপন্ন হয় অথচ এই কাঁচামালের বেশীর ভাগ বাংলার বাহিরে গালা হইয়া বিদেশে চালান যায়।

১৩৪১ সালে কেবল কলিকাতা থেকে বিদেশে গালা রপ্তানি হয়েছিল ৩ কোটি ২৬ লক্ষ ৬৩ হাজার ৮ শত ৮১ টাকার। ১৩৪২ সালে ১ কোটি ৫৮ লক্ষ ২৭ হাজার ৫ শত ৩৬ টাকার গালা কলিকাতা থেকে বিদেশে রপ্তানি হয়েছে। কিন্তু একটা কথা এই যে, আমাদের দেশের কাঁচামাল (refine) পরিষ্কার করে যে গালা তৈরী হয় এর অধিকাংশ লাভের ভাগটা বেহার ও উড়িষ্যার লোক পেয়ে থাকে। আমাদের এই বাংলা দেশের লোকেরা কোটি কোটি টাকার লাহার চাষ করে, কিন্তু লাভের বেলায় ভাগ নেয় বেহার ও উড়িষ্যার লোকেরা অথচ বাংলার গভর্ণমেন্ট এত বড় শিল্পের কোন উন্নতির চেষ্টা করেন না। বেহার গভর্ণমেন্টে বাংলার লোকদের কিরূপ দরদী অমৃত বাজার অন্যকার পত্রিকা পড়লেই তা বুঝতে পারবেন। বেহারের একজন বড় নেতা যমুনালাল বাজাজ, তাঁর মত

লোকও আমাদের বাংলা দেশের বিহার প্রবাসী লোকদের বিদেশী বলিয়া ঘৃণা করে, অথচ সেই দেশের লোককে আমাদের দেশের লাহা শিল্পের অধিকাংশ লাভের টাকা গ্রহণ করবার সুযোগ দেওয়া হয়। বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্ট এত বড় লাহা শিল্প ব্যাপারে আজ পর্য্যন্ত কিছুই করিতেছেন না কেন? বাংলা দেশের মালদহ জেলায় কুটির শিল্প হিসাবে এর প্রবর্ত্তন করা ও গভর্ণমেণ্ট হইতে সাহায্য করা নিতান্ত প্রয়োজন। এরপরে রেশম শিল্পের কথা আমি কিছু বোলছি। প্রায় আড়াই শো বছর আগে মালদহ জেলার পৌড়ের ভিখু সেক নামে একটি লোক এক জাহাজ রেশম এই বাংলা দেশ থেকে বিদেশে রুসিয়ায় চালান দিয়াছিলেন। অথচ এখন দেখছি সেই বাংলায় ১৩৩১ সালে নকল রেশম আমদানি হ'য়েছিল ৫৪ লক্ষ ৩০ হাজার টাকার। তার দশ বৎসর পরে ১৩৪১ সালে ৩৩ লক্ষ ৬৬ হাজার টাকার নকল রেশম এবং ১৮ লক্ষ ৫৮ হাজার টাকার রেশমী বস্ত্র অন্য দেশ থেকে কোলকাতায় এ'সেছে। ১৩৪২ সালে নকল রেশম এসেছে ২৬ লক্ষ ২১ হাজার টাকার আর রেশমী বস্ত্র এসেছে ২১ লক্ষ ৮৫ হাজারটাকার; আর কাঁচা রেশম মাল এসেছে ১০ লক্ষ ২১ হাজার টাকার, এই থেকে আপনারা বুঝতে পারছেন আমাদের দেশে আমরা সবাই কেবল চাকুরি চাকুরি কোরে বেড়াই—মন্ত্রীদিগকে অনেকেই আমরা দেশের শিক্ষিত যুবকদিগকে চাকুরি দিতে বলি অথচ এই রেশম শিল্পের দিকে গভর্ণমেণ্ট একটু শুভদৃষ্টি দিলে হাজার হাজার লোক এই রেশম শিল্প থেকে সুতা বেচে, কাপড় বুনিয়ে, কাপড় বেচে, আজকালকার মামুলি চাকুরি অপেক্ষা অনেক ভাল আয় করতে পারে।

বাংলার সুতা থেকেই বেনারসী শাড়ী তৈরি হয় আর বিক্রি হয় দ্বিগুণ দামে। শুধু তাই নয়—ভারতের বাহিরে ও নানা স্থানে—সুতা ও কাপড় চালান যায় আর পরে বিদেশের ছাপ নিয়ে বাংলার বাজারে তিন চার গুণ দামে বিক্রি হয়। অথচ বাংলার শিক্ষিত যুবকেরা মালদহ ছোতে খুব সস্তা দামে খাটি রেশম আনিয়ে লাভজনক ব্যবসা করতে চেষ্টা করেন না; গভর্ণমেণ্টও সেদিকে বিশেষ মন দেন না। আমার বাড়ীর কাছে মালদহ জেলার শিবগঞ্জে বাদসাহি আমল থেকে কয়েক শত ঘর হিন্দু তাঁতী সুন্দর টিকসই খাঁটি রেশমি কাপড় বুনে অথচ বাহিরের লোক এই সব খাঁটি সস্তা জিনিষের খুব কমই খোজ রাখে।

আপনারা দয়া করে আমার একটা কথা শুনবেন। আমি বাংলার শাসনকর্ত্তা লর্ড কারমাইকেলের রেশম রুমালের কাহিনী আপনাদিগকে বোলছি। তিনি যখন বাংলা দেশের গভর্ণর ছিলেন তখনকার কথা।

**Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD:** Sir, we cannot hear anything of what the hon'ble member is saying on account of Dr. Sanyal's conversations with his friends.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I am sorry, Sir, that I diverted the hon'ble member's attention, but the attention of all of us has been diverted by the way in which the Hon'ble Chief Minister is caressing and demonstrating his affection towards certain members. (Laughter.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** So, you are getting jealous!

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** As Prime Minister, I have got the right to go to any part of this Chamber.

**Maulvi IDRIS AHMED MIA:** সমসাময়িক সংবাদ পত্রে যেভাবে কথাটা বাহির হয়েছিল তা মোটামুটি এইরূপ। এক প্রকার রেশমী রুমাল তিনি পছন্দ করতেন। ঐ রুমাল পাইবার জন্য তিনি তার পূর্বে সরবরাহকারীকে লিখিলে তিনি তাহা পাঠাইতে না পারিয়া জানাইলেন "আমরা ইতালি হইতে তাহা আনাইয়াছিলাম।" সেখানে লেখা হইলে তারা বললেন "ফ্রান্স হইতে আনাইয়াছিলাম।" ফ্রান্সে লেখা হো'লে তারা বললেন "আমরা আনিয়েছিলাম বোম্বে থেকে।" বোম্বের ব্যবসায়ীরা বলেছিলেন "আমরা আনিয়েছিলাম মির্জাপুর মুর্শিদাবাদ থেকে।" মির্জাপুরের তাঁতীরা মালদহ হো'তে সুতা আনিয়ে কাপড় বুনায়। লর্ড কারমাইকেলের রুমাল কাহিনী থেকে আমাদের রেশম শিল্পের অধঃপতনের বেশ প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায়।

এটা পূর্বে প্রকাশিত হো'য়েছিলো, আপনারা অনেকে হয় তো জানেন। আমাদের মন্ত্রী মহাশয় বাজেটে দেখিয়েছেন Industrial survey র scheme র বাবদ ২০ হাজার টাকা খরচ, store organisation এর বাবদ ১৮ হাজার টাকা, কিন্তু যে সব শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠান আমাদের বাংলা দেশের জন্য বিশেষ উপযোগী ও দরকারী তাদের প্রতি দৃষ্টি কোথায়? প্রস্তাবিত শিল্প বাদ্‌ঘরের জন্য ধরা হয়েছে ৫০ হাজার অথচ পাট হইতে দড়ি তৈরির আদর্শ স্কুলের সাহায্য বাবদ মাত্র ৩৮ হাজার টাকা। আর সারা বাংলার বে-সরকারী টেকনিক্যাল ও শিল্প স্কুলগুলিকে সাহায্য করবার জন্য রেখেছেন মাত্র দশ হাজার টাকা।

**Dr. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to wholeheartedly support the motion of Mrs. Hema Prova Majumdar.

Bengal at present is no doubt a predominently agricultural country, but it was not always so. It was formerly—and I speak on the authority of the late Mr. R. C. Dutt, the famous economist—as much an industrial as an agricultural country. In days gone by, 45 per cent. of the people of Bengal used to live on industry, 45 per cent. on agriculture, and 10 per cent. only on service and other means. With the advent of British in India and due to the policy of exploitation followed by the then East India Company the old industries of Bengal were ruined, and Bengal became, instead of both an industrial and agricultural country, primarily an agricultural country. The industrialists of the past had nothing else to fall on except land, and the land which used to support only 45 per cent. was utterly insufficient to support 90 per cent. of the population. As a result, the peasants of Bengal became poor, and gradually over-burdened with debt. That is the picture of rural Bengal now.

Now, Sir, if we want to do anything for rural Bengal, we must relieve this pressure on the land. We must rehabilitate the economic structure of rural Bengal, and that can only be done by reducing the number of the people now living on agriculture. We must again industrialize the country, so that in the near future, the old ratio can be re-established, i.e., 45 per cent. of the population will live on industry, 45 per cent. on agriculture, and 10 per cent. only on services and other means. If we can do that then Bengal will again be converted into "Sonar Bangla," i.e., golden Bengal. Otherwise, whatever we may do, the present miserable condition of Bengal will not disappear.

Now, Sir, having realised this, the path before us is quite clear. We must industrialize the country. But the question is how to do this. There are various ways. Some will say—start mass scale industries on a planned economy and do as Russia has done. Some will say—develop cottage industries and follow the methods suggested by Gandhiji. Of course as a socialist I frankly say that I do support the Soviet system of mass scale production initiated by the Government. But situated as we are, with the possibilities of so many limitations being imposed upon the Central Government even after the inauguration of the proposed Federation—with the Railways, the Posts and Telegraphs, the Tariffs, the Exchange Policy—being in the hands of foreigners, I am afraid it is not possible at this stage for us to undertake a very big scale industrial plan. So, Sir, we shall have to adopt now a double policy. On the one hand we shall have to develop large-scale industries as possible and on the other hand, we must not neglect cottage industries also.

As regards large-scale industries, we thought the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge would show us some definite work. We were assured of this last year, and we expected to see the development of some industries this year. But nothing at all has been done in that direction. He has again come forward with only suggestions of surveys and nothing more. I tell the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge and along with him the Government that the whole of Bengal is hungry, and hungry Bengal wants food.

(The member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi ABDUL WAHED:** আমি আমার বন্ধু সাহেদালি সাহেবের প্রস্তাব সমর্থন কোরতে উঠে উক্ত প্রস্তাব সম্বন্ধে দুকথা বলবো। আমি বোলতে চাই এই বাংলা দেশে লক্ষ লক্ষ শ্রমজাত শিল্পকলা বিরাজিত ছিলো, যেদিন বাংলা সাধীনভাবে দাঁড়িয়েছিল। যেদিন বাংলার গলায় পরাধীনতার শৃঙ্খল পরিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে তারপর থেকেই, নিদারুণ নিষ্ঠুরভাবে তার শ্রমশিল্পগুলিকে নিঃশেষ করা হয়েছে। আমাদের সেই শিল্পগুলি ধ্বংস হবার কিছুদিন পর যখন আবার বাংলা দেশের কতকগুলি কর্ম্মী লোক গরীব জনসাধারণের খাওয়া পরার অভাব দূরীকরণার্থে পুনরায় শিল্প বিস্তারের আয়োজন আরম্ভ কোরেছে, বিশেষ কোরে বাংলার বস্ত্রশিল্পের পুনরুদ্ধারে প্রবৃত্ত হয়েছে তখন আমলাতন্ত্র-গভর্ণমেন্ট দ্বারা সেইসকল লোকের প্রতি নির্য্যাতনের কিছুমাত্র ত্রুটি হয় নাই।

আজকে অনেক দিন পরে আমলাতন্ত্র-গভর্ণমেন্টের সুমতি উদয় হোয়েছে। সুতরাং আমি মনে করি যে, আমাদের সামনে এখন একটা শুভ মুহূর্ত্ত উপস্থিত। কিন্তু এখনও দেখি যে সমস্ত লোক নিজের হাতে কাটা সুতার মোটা কাপড় প'রে নির্ভয়ে বিচরণ করেন তাঁদের দেখে আমলাতান্ত্রিক মনোবৃত্তি সম্পন্ন গভর্ণমেন্ট এবং তাঁদের চেলা চামুণ্ডারা নাক সেটকায়, সেইজন্যই এখনো পর্য্যন্ত আমরা বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেন্টের শিল্পের উন্নতিমূলক নীতির প্রতি নিঃসন্দেহ হ'তে পারি নাই। শিল্প বিস্তারের দ্বারা বাংলার উন্নতি কোরতে হবে একথা যদি সত্য হয়, তাহলে যখন বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেন্টের বাজেটের দিকে লক্ষ্য করি, যখন আমাদের দয়াল তহবিলদারের দানের দিকে লক্ষ্য হয় তখন বোলতে ইচ্ছা করে ঐ যে ছেলেবেলায় একটা কবিতায় পড়েছিলাম পুনর্বিচার

"ভিক্ষা দেয় কৃপণ যেমতি, পড়ে জল সুবিমল সূক্ষ্ম ধারে অতি"। দেশের উন্নতির জন্য, জাতীয় উন্নতিকল্পে যে সমস্ত খরচের বরাদ্দ ধরা হয়েছে সেসব দেখলে ঐ কৃপণের দানের কথাটাই মনে পড়ে। আমি বোলতে চাই বাংলার উন্নতি প্রকৃতরূপে কোরতে গেলে শিল্প, কৃষি ইত্যাদি সব বিষয়ের দিকেই বিশেষ দৃষ্টি দিতে হবে। বিশেষ কোরে আমার বলবার বিষয় এই যে এই বাংলার প্রধান সম্পত্তি পাট এবং সুতাদ্বারা ঘরে ঘরে [illegible] প্রচলন না করা পর্যন্ত কেবল কলকারখানা দ্বারা দেশের ও জাতির উন্নতি হ'তে পারে না। বাংলার উন্নতির যুগের শ্রেষ্ঠ বস্ত্রশিল্প—ঢাকার মস্‌লিন আর কিশোরগঞ্জের তাঞ্জাব এদেশের ইতিহাসের পৃষ্ঠাকে উজ্জ্বল কোরে রেখেছে। তখন দেশে কল কারখানা ছিল না। হাতের কাটা সুতাতেই ঐ সকল বস্ত্র প্রস্তুত হইত। উপযুক্ত উৎসাহ ও সুযোগ পেলে বস্ত্রশিল্পের তদ্রূপ উন্নতি বাংলা দেশের পক্ষে অসম্ভব নয়। এখন যে সকল শিল্পের দিকে মনোযোগ দেওয়া হইতেছে, তাহার কতক এখনও আমাদের দেশে বিদ্যমান আছে, কিন্তু যে সকল শিল্পজাত, নিত্য প্রয়োজনীয় ও বিলাস সামগ্রী বিদেশ হইতে আমদানি হইয়া প্রতি বছর কোটী কোটী টাকা বিদেশে চলিয়া যাইতেছে, তাহা বন্ধ করার কোনই ব্যবস্থা হইতেছে না। অতএব এই কুটীরশিল্পের দিকে বিশেষ কোরে দৃষ্টি দিবার জন্য আমাদের সদয় গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনুরোধ ক'রে আমি আমার বক্তৃতা শেষ কোরলাম।

**Maulvi ABUL QUASEM:** At the very outset, I must thank my friends over there for giving me an opportunity to speak a few words on this cut motion.

To my mind, want of a comprehensive and practical scheme, inadequacy of funds for the same and lack of determination on the part of Government are the main causes which are retarding the progress of industrial development of our country. I am definitely of opinion that unless active measures are taken in this direction immediately, another economic crisis is inevitable, a crisis which would be more dangerous and disastrous than the one which we have just experienced.

Sir, this morning I had a cursory glance over the White Paper which the Hon'ble Minister issued to us and I frankly say that I was not very much impressed by what he has said in this White Paper. He has spoken of many big schemes and high projects, but he has altogether lost the real point at issue. But what is it that is troubling us at the present moment? To my mind, the whole question is how far the economic problem can be solved by this industrial development in our country. My impression on the subject is that the only solution is to give ample opportunities or facilities to the people of Bengal for the ready sale of their goods which they produce, in Government co-operative stores in every district or subdivision which I would ask the Government to establish. If this is done, people would naturally take interest and produce goods for which they would get ready sale. In this connection I may give you some concrete examples of my district how men with a small capital of Rs. 40 or 50 can easily earn their livelihood if they can get ready market for the sale of their goods which they produce. In some parts of my district, ordinary tape-making is a very common business. Everyone in that part of the district knows this business. If everyone starts that business say with

Rs. 30 or 40, he will have to purchase materials worth about Rs. 25 and he will have to spend Rs. 5 for labour and then he can produce articles worth Rs. 35. Now, if he goes to the subdivisional headquarters and gets a ready sale for his goods which he has produced, he will get Rs. 5 as profit. Out of this Rs. 5, if he deducts Re. 1 for the expense of his journey, he will make a clear profit of Rs. 4. That means that he can earn Rs. 16 or 20 a month with a capital of Rs. 30 or 40. If this is done, I think the economic question which is troubling us so much at the present moment will be solved to a great extent.

Now, take another business which was once very lucrative in my district. This business in now dying out. The embroidery business was very lucrative and people used to go outside India, to Europe, America and other parts of the world with this embroidery work.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** (He began his speech with some Arabic quotation and then said) Sir, there was the will of God and the universe came to exist at once. As I have been given only three minutes, I do not know if I shall be able to create anything.

Sir, I may point out here that I had a scheme and I placed that scheme before the Director of Industries as well as before the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Co-operation. I guess from the discussion that took place with the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and the Director of Industries that they are in sympathy with my scheme. I have got the details of that scheme with me. I mean to say that co-operation alone is the only way by which agriculture and industries can improve and thrive in this country. In the countries outside, with co-operation, they have made progress and they have brought about a millenium. My scheme is this. Government may, just now, if they have imagination, establish model societies, one, at least, in each subdivision. I do not mean that the Government themselves should establish the societies but should give inspiration to the people, so that people may take courage and may establish societies themselves. These societies may undertake to have industries in one part and Agriculture in another. Funds may be raised by shares and loans and deposits. Land for the establishment of the societies may be acquired under the Land Acquisition Act or from voluntary giving of land in lieu of shares. Shares may be given for money as well as in lieu of land that a man may give. In this way a society may be established in a particular place. In this way the society may have a working capital. Loans may be advanced by the Central Bank or by the Co-operatice Provincial Bank. For this again Government's help is necessary. Government may give grants-in-aid. Government may give a guarantee in case the Central Bank or the Provincial Bank feels diffident in advancing

loan to the society. When money is received, if the people are helped by the Departments with their expert knowledge they can work wonders and society may be working for agriculture, horticulture, pisciculture etc., and for development of industries. Everything is possible and the beginning may be made in a small scale—

(The member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** As far as I have been able to gather from the speech of Mrs. Hema Prova Majumdar, she says that I have promised a five years programme which I have not fulfilled. I can assure you that this is a preliminary and the first instalment of the five years plan. Secondly, she states that in my scheme I have done nothing in regard to cottage industries. Being a gentleman I do not wish to contradict a lady, so I shall keep quiet on the subject.

My friend Mr. Sukumar Dutt has exploded many myths and I should like to explode another myth in which he expressed that the Congress provinces have done more in regard to industrial regeneration. I shall quote figures which will explode a bigger myth than that of my hon'ble friend.

| | | Rs. |
|---|---|---|
| In 1937-38 Bengal spent | ... | 11,92,000 |
| In 1938-39 | ... | 16,62,000 |
| In 1937-38 U.P. | ... | 18,17,000 |
| In 1938-39 | ... | 20,92,000 |
| In 1937-38 Madras | ... | 15,42,000 |
| In 1938-39 | ... | 15,28,000 |
| i.e., to say less. | | |
| In 1937-38 Bihar | ... | 9,42,000 |
| In 1938-39 | ... | 10,61,000 |

If you compare the figures you will find that since I have taken charge of this office, I have spent more than any other Province in India. If I had the time I could compare the figures of all other provinces with that of Bengal as I have got not only the figures but all their schemes as well, and could convince my friends that I have not done badly.

I regret very much that Mr. Shahedali has not studied the subject very carefully. Had he done so he would not have moved this cut motion. I think he is not aware that this Fishery Department has ceased to exist for the last 20 years and for me to go to revive this industry it is necessary to have an expert to go thoroughly into the question of fishery. Unfortunately I am not in a position to hurry up the matter because it is necessary to have a concrete idea as to what

should be done in regard to the revival of Fishery industry. As soon as I get the report of the Special Officer I shall submit it to the House.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May we know if he has made any calculation of the income of the department?

**The Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja HABIBULLAH Bahadur, of Dacca:** I do not want to answer to what the good boy of that side has said.

I appreciate very much the many important points raised by the hon'ble member representing the Muslim Chamber of Commerce. As I have already explained in my memorandum which has been circulated, the Government will take definite steps to formulate ideas on basic materials in respect of the development of key industries. My hon'ble friends know that every proposal for the development of industries in a country is indisputably bound up with currency, fiscal and railway freights also. I can assure the House that we will do our best to give relief where it will be needed.

The time at my disposal is very short and I will not be able to reply to everybody's question. But I can assure the House that I am trying my level best to bring the Industries Department to work in the interests of the people for which it is supposed to exist.

Regarding silk I have clearly stated in my statement which I have circulated to the hon'ble members, what I intend to do.

I shall take one more minute and I have finished. It is very unfortunate that my friends on the other side who were so insistent on demanding the revival of the industries of Bengal do not persuade their Bengali friends to come forward with capital and to be the pioneers in starting industries. It has been left to people from outside Bengal to start industries here. I cannot be held responsible if my Bengali friends do not come forward with their capital. The development of industry in Bengal depends on the capital of Bengal. Unless the Bengalees desist from sucking the blood of the poor cultivators by lending money at a very high rate of interest and invest their capital in industries there can be no development industrially.

The motion of Mrs. Hemaprova Majumdar that the demand under the head "43—Industries—Industries" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Shahedali that the demand under the head "43—Industries—Industries" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Nawab Khwaja Habibullah Bahadur, of Dacca, that a sum of Rs. 15,61,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Industries" was then put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have just received a message from the other House which the Secretary will please read.

Secretary then read:—

"I am directed to return herewith the Bengal Expiring Laws Bill, 1938, which was passed by the Council with an amendment at its meeting held on the 24th March 1938 with the message that the concurrence of the Assembly is asked to the following amendments made in the Bill by the Council, namely, that the following proviso be added to clause 2 of the Bill, namely:—

"provided that clause 7(7) of the Indian Stamp (Bengal Amendment) Act, 1935, shall not continue in force after the 31st May 1938".

**Mr. SPEAKER:** This message was received about 2 p.m. to-day. The Bill has thereafter been printed immediately, with the amendment and laid on the table just now and it is possible that it will be taken up on Tuesday or Wednesday. The actual time will be announced to you to-morrow.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 10-30 a.m., on Saturday, the 26th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 26th March, 1938, at 10-30 a.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 227 members.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** In view of the shortness of time to-day and on Monday, I do not propose to have questions for more than 15 minutes to-day and 5 minutes on Monday. If there are any questions left over as a result of this procedure, they will be answered on Tuesday.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

### Public Service Commission's recommendations in cases of new appointments.

*296. **Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Finance Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) how many new appointments of gazetted officers, upper and lower division clerks have been made under different departments of Government from the 1st April, 1937, to 31st January, 1938, in temporary and permanent cadres;

(*ii*) in regard to how many and of which class of these appointments the recommendations of the Provincial Public Service Commission were sought;

(*iii*) in how many and of which class of the appointments the recommendations of the Public Service Commission though obtained were not acted up to; and

(*iv*) what is the procedure adopted in regard to appointments for which the Public Service Commission is required to make recommendations?

(*b*) Is it a fact that in a number of cases all applications were not placed before the Public Service Commission and preliminary selections were made by other authorities?

(*c*) Is it a fact that in connection with some of the appointments made, the Public Service Commission had sought or received departmental or other recommendations?

(*d*) What are the principles, if any, on which the Provincial Public Service Commission is required to make its selections for appointment under Government?

**MINISTER in charge of the FINANCE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker):** (*a*)(*i*) 201.

(*ii*) 108, being the number of cases in which it was necessary to consult the Commission under the Bengal Public Service Commission Regulations, a copy of which is placed on the Library table.

(*iii*) One, namely, appointment to the post of Deputy Director of Industries.

(*iv*) The procedure is described in rules 1 to 4 of "Rules to regulate the manner in which the duties of the Public Service Commission should be performed", a copy of which is placed on the Library table.

(*b*) This happened in one case. The vacancy had been advertised and preliminary selections made before the Public Service Commission came into existence. The Commission was asked to advise only on the applications of those preliminarily selected.

(*c*) Departmental recommendations were placed before the Commission in three cases.

(*d*) The hon'ble member is referred to rules 2 to 4 of the rules mentioned in reply to part (*a*) (*iv*) of this question.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state with reference to answer (*a*)(*ii*), in how many cases the appointments have not been made, although the Public Service Commission was consulted?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** There have been some cases, but I cannot give the figures off-hand; I want notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** With reference to answer (*a*) (*iii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why the appointment to the post of Deputy Director of Industries could not be made as advised by the Public Service Commission?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I want notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that cases of promotion and transfer from one service to another as required under section 266 of the Government of India Act, have not been in all cases referred to the Public Service Commission, apart from those mentioned in the Regulations?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** For that also, Sir, I want notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the post of Secretary, Medical College, which is one of the posts not governed by the Regulations concerned has not been referred to the Public Service Commission?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I do not know; I want notice.

**Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD:** With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to say whether the departmental recommendations placed before the Public Service Commission have been accepted? Or, if accepted, how many have been accepted?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** I want notice.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Public Service Commission recommends one name only for acceptance or suggests several names, and whether in case several names are recommended by them they decide about the order of preference in their recommendations?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** Yes: they recommend about 3 or 4 names and they put them in order of merit.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** In that event will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if, apart from the one mentioned in (*a*) (*iii*), there are other cases in which the first nomination of the Commission was not accepted by the Government?

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** There are some cases, but I want notice for the exact figure.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** With reference to answer (*b*), is the Finance Minister aware that only the other day the Chief Minister said in his reply that there have been no such cases? The

Finance Minister now says that there has been one case. How is this consistent with the reply of the Chief Minister who said that all cases were placed before the Commission?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** I submit, Sir, it arises, as the Chief Minister said that all the appointments of headmasters were referred to the Public Service Commission.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I never said that.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Chief Minister was referring to the posts of headmasters which does not arise here.

### Hunger-strikes in Dacca Central Jail.

*297. **Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that the hunger-strikers in Dacca Central Jail submitted a memorial to the Government stating their grievances;

(*ii*) that the Government gave an assurance that their grievances would be considered after the calling-off of the strike;

(*iii*) that they gave up hunger-strike;

(*iv*) that Dr. Bhupal Bose, Prafulla Sen, and Bhupesh Lahiri have been transferred to some other jails a few days after they called off the hunger-strike;

(*v*) that Dr. Bhupal Bose is a tuberculosis patient in delicate health; and

(*vi*) that Prafulla Sen and Bhupesh Lahiri were also ill at the time of transfer?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether those three prisoners were examined by a doctor before they were transferred?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to place on the table the report of the Medical Officer regarding the health of these prisoners when they were transferred to other jails?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the places where they were transferred and what medical arrangement has been made there for their treatment?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for their transfer?

(*f*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he has considered the grievances of those hunger-strikers as stated in their memorial?

(*g*) What measure, if any, has the Hon'ble Minister taken in the matter of redressing their grievances?

**MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin):** (*a*) (*i*), (*iii*) to (*v*) and (*b*) Yes.

(*ii*) Government said they would be examined.

(*vi*) No.

(*c*) They were examined by the Medical Officer who recorded the fact that they were fit for transfer on their history tickets.

(*d*) The prisoner, Bhupal Bose, was transferred to Howrah and is under the care of the Civil Surgeon. The others were transferred to Comilla and require no special medical treatment.

(*e*) The prisoner, Bhupal Bose, was sent to Dacca in order to facilitate interviews with his relatives. These having been completed he was returned to Howrah. The remaining two were transferred for administrative reasons.

(*f*) and (*g*) Their grievances as recorded by the prisoners themselves have been sent for report to the quarterly Board of Visitors who will submit their conclusions to Government through the Inspector-General. On receipt of this report I shall examine them.

**Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the administrative reasons for which the remaining two prisoners were transferred, as mentioned in answer (*e*)?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Convenience of the administration of the Jail.

**Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what convenience was derived by this transfer?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am afraid, Sir, it is difficult to answer a comprehensive question like this in course of a supplementary question.

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why Dr. Bhupal Bose who is a T.B. patient was thus transferred from place to place?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I have already explained that Dr. Bhupal Bose was sent to Dacca specially at the request of his relations to enable him to interview his old grandfather who was unable to come to Calcutta and as a special privilege he was sent from Howrah to Dacca in order that he may be in a position to interview his grandfather.

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why Dr. Bhupal Bose was again returned to Howrah?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question has been answered.

**Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the Board of Visitors will submit their report after discussing the matter with the prisoners of the Dacca Jail?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** That is a matter for the Board of Visitors. As far as the Government are concerned, they sent all the applications submitted by the prisoners to the Quarterly Board for examination and report.

**Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if these prisoners will be consulted by the Board?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I cannot anticipate what the Board is going to do in this matter.

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** With reference to answers (*f*) and (*g*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when their grievances were recorded and received and when they were sent to the Quarterly Board of Visitors?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** May I remind the House that their grievances are mostly those that were read out on the floor of this House on the occasion of the last hunger-strike, and that since then all the grievances that have been submitted by them have been forwarded to the Quarterly Board for examination?

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Sir, I wanted to know the dates, and not the reasons and the nature of the grievances.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would ask the hon'ble member to take a reasonable view. The dates can be ascertained from the reply given to the question and the statements made by me in this House. It is certainly not possible for me to carry the dates in my head!

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the exact time which has elapsed since the grievances have been received?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I would again refer the hon'ble member to the reply given by me, namely, that their main grievances were submitted on the occasion of their giving up the hunger-strike in the Dacca Jail.

**Mr. MANORANJAN BANNERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the time by which the Board of Visitors are expected to complete their enquiry?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** They were supposed to report by the middle of March.

**Interference of police officer at a public meeting at Kalikhola, Dacca.**

*298. **Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether on the 26th January last police officers in charge of the police-station Sreenagar in the district of Dacca accompanied by constables and *chaukidars* attended a public meeting held to celebrate the Independence Day on the ground of Kalikhola;

(*ii*) whether it is a fact that they pushed Babu Hiralal Dutta, the Secretary of the Sreenagar Congress Committee, and snatched away the Congress flag; and

(*iii*) whether it is a fact that they also abused and took down the names of many people who gathered there?

(*b*) If the answers to (*a*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether there was any prohibitory order against the meeting; and

(*ii*) if not, under whose order was the above action taken by the local police?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) An officiating sub-inspector attended this meeting.

(*ii*) and (*iii*) He took possession of the flag and noted down names of certain persons for his report. Only such force as was necessary to seize the flag was used by the police officer. Nobody was pushed or abused.

(*b*) (*i*) None.

(*ii*) The officer, who was then acting as a sub-inspector for the first time, took possession of the flag on his own initiative, but he had no *mala fide* intention in acting as he did. His action was, however, indiscreet, and this has been pointed out to him.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** What action has Government taken to see that in future such indiscreet action on the part of a police officer is not repeated?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Government do not expect indiscreet action from their officers, but it is impossible to prevent some officers sometimes making a mistake.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Was any enquiry held to find out if the force exercised was not something beyond what was actually necessary to seize the flag, and is it not a fact that people there were threatened with arrest?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The Deputy Inspector-General of Police made an enquiry and the report is, as I have stated, in the reply to the question.

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:** ২নং উত্তরের ভিতর মন্ত্রী মহাশয় বলেছেন, "only such force as was necessary to seize the flag was used by the police officer" এই যে শক্তি পুলিশ প্রয়োগ করেছিলো, সেটা কি হিংসা শক্তি না অহিংসা শক্তি?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That does not arise.

**BABU NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:** সভাপতি মহাশয়, আমি জানতে চাইছি "force" কথাটার সম্বন্ধে। গভর্ণমেণ্ট সর্বদাই violence এর কথাকে condemn করেন। সেই জন্য আমার প্রশ্নের বিষয় হচ্ছে—গভর্ণমেণ্ট officer দের দ্বারা violent শক্তি প্রয়োগ করা হয়েছে, কি non-violent শক্তি প্রয়োগ করা হয়েছে। violent যদি গভর্ণমেণ্ট হয়ে থাকেন, তাহলে দেশের লোকের আশঙ্কার কারণ আছে। আর গভর্ণমেণ্ট যদি non-violent হয়ে থাকেন, তবে দেশের non-violent হবার স্বার্থকতা আছে।

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. PROMATHA RANJAN THAKUR:** With reference to answer (*b*) (*ii*), viz., that only such force was used as was necessary to seize the flag, may I ask, does the Congress flag offend the Government in any way?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I will refer the honourable member to my reply (*b*)(*i*).

**Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the national flag was to Government just like a red rag to a bull?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question does not arise.

**Mr. NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the flag that was taken possession of has since been returned?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I am not aware of it.

## Bus and taxi passenger traffic plying for hire from Chalsa to Bagrakote Road in Jalpaiguri.

***299. Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department be pleased to state whether the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Communications and Works has been drawn to the Government Notification No. 2689P.I., of the 29th June, 1936, prohibiting bus or taxi passenger traffic plying for hire from Chalsa to Bagrakote Road in the Jalpaiguri district in view of alternative facilities for the conveyance of passengers?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that the alternative facilities referred to in the Notification consist of the facilities provided by the Bengal Duars Railway which runs only one train up and down every day along the route indicated; and

(*ii*) that the travelling public and business men are being inconvenienced because of the fact that the route connects a network of *hats* or markets?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of withdrawing the Notification?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes. But it appears from the latest time table available that the Railway runs two up and two down trains daily.

(*ii*) I have received no such complaint.

(*c*) No.

**Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** With reference to reply (*b*)(*ii*), is the Hon'ble Minister aware that a large number of business and public men sent a petition to the Chairman of the District Board praying that necessary steps should be taken to remove the ban?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** It is obvious that I do not know anything that has been referred to the Chairman of the District Board.

**Expenditure for the criminal case against Raghubar Narain Singh.**

***300. Maulana SHAMSUL HUDA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Police) Department be pleased to state how much public money was spent for the criminal case against Raghubar Narain Singh, son of Rai Bahadur Dalip Narain Singh, then a sitting member of the Legislative Council of Bihar and others in the years 1936 and 1937?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Rs. 376.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

**(answers to which were laid on the table)**

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I apologise to the House and to you, Sir, for my absence when this question was called yesterday. I had thought before leaving the House that there were no more questions to be answered by me.

**Bogra-Santahar Road.**

**80. Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware that one of the important roads in the district of Bogra, viz., Bogra-Santahar Road has not been included in the Road Development Fund Project?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons?

(*c*) Has the District Board of Bogra recommended its inclusion in the project?

(*d*) Are the Government considering the desirability of incorporating this road in the scheme?

**MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra Nandy, of Kasimbazar):** (*a*) and (*b*) It is reported by the Special Officer, Road Development Projects, Bengal, that he has not included this road in his scheme as it runs close to the railway line and is competitive with the railway.

(*c*) I have no information.

(*d*) The matter will be considered after the comprehensive road programme prepared by the Special Officer, Road Development Projects, Bengal, is received.

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the road passes through important places in the district, and as such, its incorporation in the scheme is essential to the development of roads in the district even though it is competitive with the railway?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I would only refer the honourable member to reply (*d*).

**Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI:** Was the information sought for from the District Board?

**The Hon'ble Maharaja SRIS CHANDRA NANDY, of Kasimbazar:** I cannot say that off-hand. But as I have stated in reply (*d*), the matter will be considered after the comprehensive road programme is prepared.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "8—Provincial Excise."

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I may just say that my attention has been drawn to the fact that it is the desire of the House that the excise demand should be very fully discussed. That is at least the desire of the Opposition. In the circumstances I feel that we may not be able to conclude the excise debate in one hour only. But I cannot certainly go beyond 1½ hours at the most, so that this demand would be put to the House at about 12-15 p.m. instead of 11-45 a.m.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** But will it be possible to discuss all the cut motions in that case?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** They will be taken in their usual course, and I have been assured by the Whip of the Opposition that the members concerned will take much less time.

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 19,40,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "8—Provincial Excise".

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 19,40,000 under the head "Provincial Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100.

In moving this cut, Sir, my only intention is to draw the attention of the House to the way in which the excise administration of this province is being conducted under present circumstances. On this side of the House we feel that we are spending more on excise than we ought to do. An old student of mine, who is now working in the Statistical Department of the Baker Laboratory, at my request worked out the average expenditure *per capita*. According to him I find that in the budget for next year, we shall be spending 4 annas 6 pies on education, 3 annas 3 pies on medical and public health, 1 anna 5 pies on agriculture, industries and co-operation, as against the incidence *per capita* for excise of 4 annas 4 pies in 1934-35, 4 annas 3½ pies in 1935-36, and next year it will be 4 annas 8 pies. I consider we are in this way taking away from the poor agricultural masses the benefit of the money which, we say, are going to spend for them. According to the budget estimates submitted by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister a sum of Rs. 1,32.90,000 is expected to be realised from country spirit, country fermented liquor, opium and hemp drugs out of a total of Rs. 1,50,00,000 which means that 88;6 per cent. of the total excise revenue will be realised from the poorer classes. The policy pursed by the present Government was clearly outlined by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Excise in answer to my unstarred question No. 26, which he answered on the 2nd March, 1938. According to him. I quote his exact words, "Government is discouraging the use of country liquor by the adoption of three rules—restriction on sales, reduction in the number of shops and high price of liquor." I shall not be so uncharitable as to suggest that a deliberate attempt was made to mislead the House, but I will say that those who were in charge of supplying him with information served him very badly. So far as restrictions on sales are concerned, I find that according to the statement laid on the library table there was consumed in 1934-35, 22,607 London proof gallons, and in 1936-37,

39,072 gallons of country spirit in the jute mill and industrial areas close to Calcutta. This represents an increase of 17,000 London proof gallons. So far as the all-Bengal consumption is concerned, I find that the income from this source was Rs. 41,50,000 and that in the budget for the next year, it is expected that we shall be able to realise 52 lakhs of rupees. There will thus be an increase of Rs. 10½ lakhs. I want to know what is the value of these restrictions. Instead of decreasing the sale they have tended to increase it. I would like to know what more stringent measures have been introduced by our Hon'ble Minister in charge of excise since the time he has assumed office.

I shall now go on, Sir, with the consideration of the question regarding the reduction in the number of shops. According to the statement laid on the library table under the authority of the Hon'ble Minister in the years 1934 to 1937 there were 52 country liquor shops in Calcutta. Their number is unchanged. Then, Sir, so far as the jute mills and industrial areas are concerned, there were 60 country liquor shops in the two years 1934-35 and 61 in 1936-37. Where is the reduction?

So far as the whole of Bengal is concerned, there were 899 shops in 1934-35 and 898 in 1935-36. There was a reduction of one for the whole province of Bengal. Figures for 1936-37 are not available, but the very fact that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister expects an increase of Rs. 10½ lakhs looks to me highly suspicious.

I shall now go on, Sir, to consider the question of the high price of liquor. I find by reference to the excise reports for the last three years that there has been not an increase in the price, but a reduction ranging from 12½ per cent. to 25 per cent. For instance, so far as 70 U.P. liquor is concerned, there has been a reduction of Rs. 2-6 per gallon; in the case of 60 U.P the reduction Rs. 2-0-3; in the case of 55 U.P. the reduction is Rs. 1-9; in the case of 40 U.P the reduction is Rs. 3-4-6; in the case of 30 U.P. the reduction is Rs. 4-9; in the case of 25 U.P. the reduction is Rs. 3-4 per imperial gallon. This is how the high price of liquor is to be understood.

I shall now proceed to discuss the arrangement made for the distribution of country liquor. The last available excise report will show that country liquor is sold in six strengths. One would naturally infer that as Government fixes the retail prices there should be a uniformity in the price as well as uniformity in the quality. As a matter of fact, I find that the strength of that quality of country liquor which is 25 U. P. is sold in 8 places. In three of these places the price charged is Rs. 18-2; in five other places the price charged is Rs. 11-7, a reduction of Rs. 6-11, and the reason is that in the former three places the people are better off, whereas in the last five places which are situated in rural areas,

the people are not so well off. This has naturally brought about smuggling into industrial areas from rural areas. The result is that we are placing a temptation in the way of the poor alcoholics and then punishing them for breaking those laws for which we are responsible.

Now, Sir, during this period the cheapest country spirit was 70 U.P. It was permitted to be sold by Government in four places only out of 27 districts of Bengal, that is Calcutta and suburbs and three districts, namely, Darjeeling, Bankura and Midnapore. I seem to see here, Sir, something which may be likened to the "Nelson touch". These places that I have mentioned are the places where only 25 U.P. is sold, and this liquor is expensive. Therefore, the poor alcoholics must have temptation placed in their way, and this is achieved by selling them 70 U.P. I shall now come to liquor, Sir, which stands midway between 25 and 70 U.P., that is 55 U.P. This is sold in five places only, namely, Burdwan, Birbhum, Hooghly, Howrah and 24-Parganas, probably because in these districts the people are either better off or greater addicts to alcohol. They must have their liquor, and since they must have their liquor let them have 55 U.P. and thus let them pay more money into the coffers of Government.

Then, Sir, so far as the question of illicit country spirit is concerned, I find that between 1931-32 to 1933-34, i.e., three years, there was a dimunition of 81,000 gallons and a loss of Rs. 13 lakhs in the shape of revenue. Government was much exercised over this matter. I think Government ought to have congratulated itself on this dimunition, but Government had to find an explanation of this matter, and the explanation was that this was caused by economic distress on the part of poor consumers, and consequently they had turned to illicit sources for satisfying their thirst. What was the remedy? As a temporary experiment, the price of alcohol was reduced in four places with an ingenuity which I shall not call diabolic but unholy. This reduction in the price of country spirits was brought into operation in two places in West Bengal, namely, Birbhum and Murshidabad, one place in North Bengal, namely, Mymensingh and one place in East Bengal, namely, Tippera. I noticed carefully that in these four places the reduction in consumption of country liquor had been most pronounced. This experiment met with a success which it did not deserve. In ten months, Government adopted this reduction in price on a permanent basis, and it is now an all-Bengal adoption.

Then again, Sir, so far as illicit country liquor was concerned, an additional staff was employed in 1933-34 whose special duty it was to detect such cases. I contend, Sir, that increase in the sale of

country spirit has not been due to the detection of illicit cases, because in spite of reduction in price, in spite of larger sales offences against illicit traffic in liquor were not noticeably on the decline. I notice that in 1931-32, three thousand one hundred and nine persons and in 1933-34 six thousand nine hundred and forty-nine persons were prosecuted. This is more than 2¼ times, but in subsequent years, the number of persons prosecuted came down to 5,361. and to 5,143.

The highest reduction therefore, amounted to 1,700. Was this due to the reduction in illicit manufacture and sale? It is not so, Sir, because the Excise Commissioner in his report for 1935-36, page 33, says " it is difficult to say whether the fall in the percentage of country spirit cases was due to the activity of the preventive officers, but it may have been due to the diversion of their activities towards the easier detection of toddy cases." Why, Sir, is there illicit traffic in country spirit? The reply is given again by the Excise Commissioner in his report for 1932-33. He says "this is due to widespread unemployment and acute economic distress as a result of which a larger number of people resorted to unlicensed manufacture as a means of livelihood." However, you may lower the price of country spirit, you will never be able to put a stop——

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Dr. H. C. MUKHERJI:** May I have two minutes more, Sir?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It is difficult. There is another gentleman from your group also to move his motion formally.

**Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** May I rise on a point of order, Sir? Is not the mover of the cut motion entitled to the attention of all Ministers present in the House? All the Ministers are engaged in canvassing.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** At least the Minister in charge of the department is certainly hearing. As regards others I do not know.

I will now call upon those members who want to move their cut motions to move them purely formally for the time being. Thereafter after seeing what motions are moved, I will call out speakers.

Mr. Abdulla-Al Mahmood, do you want to move your motion?

**Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD:** I will not move it, but I will speak on the subject generally.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Mazumdar, will you move your motion?

**Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR:** Yes, Sir. I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 19,40,000 under the head "8—Provincial Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100 (retrenchment and prohibition).

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKER:** I beg to move that the demand under the head "Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100 for failure to enforce prohibition in Bengal.

**Mr. BIRENDRA NATH MAZUMDAR:** Sir, as a lawyer, I am told that there was once an insistent Counsel. He was arguing an appeal case before their Lordships in the Appellate Court, and he was saying "here, my Lord, I was practically stopped by the Court below". The Judge was equal to the occasion and asked "Pray, Mr. Oswal, how did the Court below succeed in doing that?" "My Lord, by representing or misrepresenting to me that the Judge was with me".

Now, Sir, we are suffering from the same difficulty that is, our Ministers have been representing or misrepresenting to us from the last session that they are with us on this question of prohibition. There was a time when it was not possible for the Government to accept the principle of total prohibition. During the last session, however, they not only accepted it as a principle, but the Hon'ble the Chief Minister went so far as to say that "Speaking as a Muslim, I believe it to be my duty to try and have total prohibition, and as a servant of the people also, I am not worth my salt if I do not try to carry out the mandate of this House". The Hon'ble the Finance Minister went a step further. He said "It is not right on the part of a Government to be a party to organised temptations which lead the people into the path of ruin and destitution. The question of revenue must be subordinated to the question of prohibition" (hear, hear). So, therefore, the Government are committed to this task. Let us now for one moment try to find out how these professions and promises have been carried into practice. In spite of myself replying to the question, I would just draw the attention of this House to what the Finance Minister said in his Red Book which was presented to us during the last session. He said that "during slump the Excise Revenue deteriorated vry badly dropping from 228 lakhs to 134 lakhs in 1933-34, and it has been slow to respond to the slight general recovery that set in thereafter." That shows the despair and disappointment that the Minister had, because the general revenue derived from Excise could not respond to his overtures. But still they calculated upon an excess of revenue from this prostituted source to the extent of 3 lakhs of rupees. Thereafter there were those promises made on the floor of this House. And how those promises were respected? Again, I would refer to the Red Book

presented to us this year. This Red Book says that in spite of the expected additional income of 3 lakhs of rupees what the Government have got during these twelve months is an excess of revenue to the extent of 20 lakhs. This is not only prohibition but prohibition with a vengeance.

Now let me look at the practicability of prohibition. Last session the Hon'ble the Excise Minister gave us certain facts as to the comparative average consumption of country liquor per hundred of population in the different provinces. He said that in Bombay, at the top, they consumed 5·9 gallons, whereas at the bottom, Bengal consumed only ·49 gallons per hundred of population. Then he gave certain figures with a view to show how the consumption of all these three things, i.e., liquor, hemp and opium, was coming down year after year. These figures will show that the consumption was at its highest in 1911-12, then it fell down in 1925-26, and it further fell in 1935-36. These figures if correct, will show that each time consumption came down considerably, whenever the Congress took up the work of prohibition. It will be worthy of note that while the revenue in 1920-21 was 1 crore 96 lakhs, the very next year when the Congress took up non-co-operation, it fell down to 1·83 lakhs. Then, again, the revenue went on increaseing till the year 1929-30 when it was 2 crores 26½ lakhs. The very next year in 1930 the Congress started the Civil Disobedience Movement and prohibition was one of its main planks. It is now a matter of history how thousands and thousands of Congress volunteers and Leaders were sent to jail, assaulted, and insulted for the offence of promoting prohibition by picketing or encouraging the same.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** I move this cut motion, Sir, to bring it home to the Government that the total prohibition is the universal demand in the country. It is no argument at present to say that prohibition failed in some other parts of the world. Here in Bengal, the condition is peculiar. It is pre-eminently a Muslim country and Mussalmans are prohibited from taking any liquor or any intoxicating drugs. And as to the Hindu community most of whom are in the Congress they are also pressing for total prohibition. For the last few years and during the National movement the Hindu communities pressed this matter very much and under the able guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, they even went so far as to picket the Excise shops so that the Government may be forced to accept the principle of total prohibition. It is, therefore, Sir, only the Government that is now carrying on a policy against this prohibition. If the Government wish now to enforce prohibition in Bengal, it will be very easy. In other parts of the world there was a strong anti-feeling against prohibition but here in Bengal there is none and if the Government

would accept only the principle, it will be very easy for them to enforce total prohibition at once. The Hon'ble the Chief Minister, also promised us during the last budget session to experiment in some districts but unfortunately no district has yet properly been selected for experimental purposes. It is said that prohibition will begin and that the Government will take up the matter in the district of Noakhali but as I submitted in my budget criticism that it will be merely an eye wash because the Noakhali district is a place where the least of liquor is consumed and one of my friends suggested that only 215 gallons per year is consumed in that district.

I submit, Sir, that much injury has been caused to the country by the present Government in pursuance of their programme and policy, if any, they have practically refused to accept the principle of fixing the minimum price of jute. They have also refused to accept the principle of establishing dispensaries in every Union Board. They have also played a hide-and-seek policy with respect to the amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act. (Cries of "Question, question.") I strongly appeal to Government to accept this cut motion, so that the people may not say that we are not doing any good to the country. It will enhance the prestige of Government if they accept the principle of total prohibition and launch it at once. We have had enough of promises, and, therefore, I appeal to the House, to the Cabinet and to the representatives of different communities in this House to support this motion, which is intended for the benefit of the people. It is unfortunate, Sir, that a section of the press—especially a daily paper like the "Ajad"—is preaching against prohibition. But as against this I submit that we have on one side the injunction of His Holiness the Pir Saheb of Furfura, and on the other the mandate of Mahatma Gandhi. If we consider the injunctions of these two world famous persons, we shall realise that a few articles in the "Ajad" or some other paper cannot stand in our way. We have the holy injunctions of the Koran with us. We have also the mandates of other religions against the drinking of wines and the use of intoxicants. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that it is incumbent upon the present Government, which professes much admiration for Islam, to accept the principle of prohibition——

(At this stage there was great uproar in the Chamber.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I think I have repeatedly drawn the attention of this House to the fact that it is desirable that discussions on matters affecting the economic and political life of the people of this country may be carried on an economic and political plane. Matters concerning religion and religious scriptures might safely be left out when economic and political questions are discussed. You will realise yourself the danger that once religion is allowed to intrude into discussions affecting the economic and political life of this country, you don't

know where you are going to stop, and I cannot forbid any other member from bringing in religion into such discussion in his turn. So, I would appeal to you and to all members of this House that they may kindly desist from dragging in religion in such matters.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** May I know, Sir, whether mention of religion is banned in this House?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Oh, no, no. What I was saying was that there was a danger in introducing religion when economic and political questions were being discussed.

**Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD:** But the danger is there already. It cannot but be admitted that Mussalmans are Mussalmans and Hindus are Hindus, and that we have come here on communal tickets.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Sir, I do not like to take any more time of the House. I should only like to make my final appeal to all sections of the House—the Muslims, the Hindus, the Christians, the Europeans, and my friends of the scheduled castes—to see that the country is not forced to drink for the sake of revenue. I was born in this province, and I have sufficient knowledge as to the workings of the inner mind of the people. I submit, Sir, that they never drink wines, etc., willingly, unless and until excise shops are kept open before them and some sort of glamour is displayed before their eyes. So, if this principle is accepted and excise shops are closed, and if there be no opportunity of drinking wines or getting intoxicating drugs—I think the evils of drink will disappear very soon.

(Here the member having reacher his time-limit resumed his seat.)

**MAULVI ABDUL HAMID SHAH:** সভাপতি মহোদয়, যে প্রস্তাব নিয়ে আজকে আলোচনা আরম্ভ হয়েছে, মৌলবী আবুহোসেন সরকার সাহেব বিশেষভাবে যুক্তি-তর্কদ্বারা তার সেই মোশনের পক্ষে এবং বিপক্ষে যে সব যুক্তি রয়েছে, তাহা প্রকাশ কোরেছেন। কিন্তু আমি আমাদের Assembly র মেম্বর মহোদয়গণের নিকট কাতরভাবে প্রার্থনা কোরছি—এই cut motion সম্বন্ধে বিচার করবার আগে আমাদের দেখতে হবে, এই যে cut motion টা আনা হয়েছে, তার প্রকৃত উদ্দেশ্য কি? আমাদের গভর্ণমেণ্ট আবগারি বিভাগের খরচের জন্য বর্ত্তমান বৎসরে ১৯ লক্ষ ৪০ হাজার টাকা বরাদ্দ করেছেন। তাই থেকে আমাদের প্রস্তাবক মহোদয় ১০০৲ টাকা কর্ত্তণ করিতে চাহিতেছেন, এই জন্য যে,—এই গভর্ণমেণ্ট মাদকদ্রব্য নিষেধ করার কাজে ঔদাসীন্য অবলম্বন কোরেছেন এবং prohibition এর প্রতি মনোযোগ দিচ্ছেন না। এই যে ১০০৲ টাকা কর্ত্তণের প্রস্তাব করা হয়েছে, এ সম্বন্ধে বিচার কোরতে গেলে আমাদের প্রথমেই দেখা কর্ত্তব্য, মাদকদ্রব্য নিষেধ করবার ব্যাপারে গভর্ণমেণ্ট কিরূপ মনোভাব পোষণ করেন এবং তাহা কার্য্যে পরিণত করবার জন্যই বা তাহারা কতদূর অগ্রসর হয়েছেন? কাজেই এক্ষেত্রে আমাদিগকে প্রথমেই দেখতে হবে, গত বৎসর আবগারী বিভাগে যত টাকা আয় হয়েছিল, আগামী

বৎসর অর্থাৎ ১৯০৮-৩৯ সনের বাজেটে তাহা অপেক্ষা আয় বাড়াইবার উদ্দেশ্য বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের আছে কি না?

এ বিষয় আমাদিগকে অধিকদূরে যেতে হবে না। যদি দেখা যায় যে গত বৎসর অপেক্ষা আগামী বৎসরে অর্থাৎ ১৯০৮-৩৯ সনের বাজেটে আয়ের খাতে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আয় বাড়াইবার মৎলব কোরছেন, তা'হলেই ইহা বলা যেতে পারে যে, গভর্ণমেণ্ট আয়ের মাত্রা বাড়াইবার জন্য মাদকদ্রব্য-ব্যবহারে উৎসাহ দিচ্ছেন। কিন্তু গত বৎসরে যে স্থলে এই বিভাগে আয় হয়েছিল ১ কোটি ৫৪ লক্ষ টাকা, সেই স্থলে যখন আলোচ্য বৎসরে আয়ের খাতে ১ কোটি ৫০ লক্ষ অর্থাৎ ৪ লক্ষ টাকা কম ধরা হয়েছে, তখন মাদকদ্রব্য ব্যবহার নিষিদ্ধ prohibition করার ব্যাপারে বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের কার্য্যতার উপর দোষারোপ করা চলে না। অতএব এক্ষেত্রে মৌলবী আবুহোসেন সরকার সাহেবের cut motion এর উপর কোনও গুরুত্ব দেওয়া যেতে পারে না।

এ সম্বন্ধে একটা সহজ উদাহরণ দিচ্ছি। যদি কোনও ছাগল প্রতিপালনকারী তাহার ছাগলদের থাকিবার জন্য একটা ঘর তৈয়ারী কোরতে চায়, তা'হলে সে তার ছাগলের সংখ্যার প্রতি লক্ষ্য রেখেই ঘরের দীর্ঘপ্রস্থ ঠিক কোরবে। কিন্তু সর্ব্বাগ্রে তার লক্ষ্য থাকবে, বৎসরে সে ছাগল প্রতিপালন করে কত টাকা আয় কোরবে—তার প্রতি।

অতএব যদি দেখা যায় যে, ছাগলের মালিক, আয়ের পরিমাণ কম হবে, এই সিদ্ধান্ত করেই গৃহ নির্ম্মাণ ও ছাগল রক্ষাকারী রাখালদের নিয়োগ ব্যাপারে খরচের পরিমাণ সাব্যস্ত কোরছেন, তা'হলে সেই খরচের উপর কর্ত্তণ প্রস্তাব এনে তাহাকে ছাগলের সংখ্যা বাড়াইবার দোষে দোষী করা যায় না। কারণ আয়ের মাত্রা কম হইলে ছাগলের সংখ্যা আপনা আপনি কমিয়া আসিবে। তবে বেয়াড়া ছাগলদের শায়েস্তা করার জন্য রাখালের সংখ্যা-বৃদ্ধি কোনও সময় আবশ্যক হইতে পারে, কিন্তু তাই বলিয়া ছাগলের সংখ্যা-বৃদ্ধির কোনও প্রশ্নই এখানে উঠিতে পারে না।

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** May I know, Sir, whom he means by "*chhagal*"— does he refer to us? (Laughter.) I am unable to follow the analogy that he is drawing.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You can draw your own conclusion. (Laughter.)

**MAULVI ABDUL HAMID SHAH :** আমি ছাগল বলিতে আপনাদের কাহারও প্রতি লক্ষ্য করি নাই। তবে যারা মাদক-সেবনকারী, তা'দিগকে বলা যেতে পারে।

যাহা হউক, খরচের দিক দিয়ে বিবেচনা করলেও দেখা যায়, গত বৎসর যে স্থলে আবগারী বিভাগের খরচ বরাদ্দ করা হয়েছিল ১৯ লক্ষ ৫৯ হাজার টাকা, সে স্থলে বর্ত্তমান বৎসরে ভোট গ্রহণ জন্য খরচ বাবদ ধার্য্য হয়েছে ১৯ লক্ষ ৪০ হাজার টাকা।

অতএব আয়বৃদ্ধির মায়া পরিত্যাগ করিয়া যে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আয়ের খাতে বাজেটে কম টাকা বরাদ্দ করিতে প্রস্তুত আছেন, তাহারা যে মাদকদ্রব্য নিষিদ্ধ করার ব্যাপারে ক্রমে অগ্রসর হচ্ছেন, একথা অস্বীকার করবার উপায় নাই।

আমার শেষ বক্তব্য এই, আবগারী বিভাগের খরচের জন্য বরাদ্দ করা টাকা হইতে যদি প্রস্তাবকের ১০০৲ টাকা কর্ত্তণের প্রস্তাব পাশ হয়, তাহলে তার পরিণাম এই হবে যে, বর্ত্তমান Ministry, যাঁরা মাদকদ্রব্য ব্যবহার ক্রমে নিষিদ্ধ করিবার জন্য চেষ্টা কোরছেন, তাদের উপরই মাদকদ্রব্য ব্যবহার নিষিদ্ধ করার ব্যাপারে ঔদাসীন্যের জন্য অনাস্থাজ্ঞাপন করা হবে। এবং যখনই এই অনাস্থাজ্ঞাপক প্রস্তাব পাশ হবে, তখনই বিনা অপরাধে এই Ministry কে resign দিতে হবে।

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SHAH SYED GOLAM SARWAR HOSAINI:** মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, অদ্যকার আলোচনার বিষয় নিয়ে এই Assembly র ভিতরে ও বাইরে ভীষণ এক প্রচার দেখা যাচ্ছে। আজ এই পরিষদের সম্মিলিত দলের বিশেষ অংশ যাঁরা, অর্থাৎ মুসলমান সম্প্রদায়, তাঁদের মধ্যে অন্যতম দল ধর্ম্মের নামে এই motion এর পক্ষ সমর্থন কোরেছেন। স্যার, এই motion যিনি এই পরিষদে উপস্থিত কোরেছেন জানি না এই motion এর পিছনে তার কতটুকু সততা নিহিত আছে। আমরা প্রজা কর্ম্মী, প্রজার ও কৃষকের স্বার্থ রক্ষা করার জন্য সর্ব্বদাই আমরা প্রস্তুত। অদ্যকার এই motion এর সহিত বাংলার সর্ব্বহারা কৃষকদের কতটুকু সম্পর্ক তা চিন্তার বিষয়। আমার মনে হয় এই motion কে উপলক্ষ্য কোরে, এই ছাটাই প্রস্তাবকে উপলক্ষ্য কোরে বাংলার বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রি সভাকে ঘায়েল করার এ একটা চেষ্টা মাত্র। স্যার, Opposition দল বারবার নানা ভাবের শব্দ ব্যবহার কোরেছেন, আমি জানি ১৯২০ সন হোতে বাংলার কংগ্রেসের সঙ্গে আমি অতি ঘনিষ্ঠ ছিলাম যখন আমার বয়স ৩৬ বছর তখন আমি বাংলার কংগ্রেস কর্ম্মীরূপে কংগ্রেসের সঙ্গে ঘনিষ্ঠভাবে সংযুক্ত ছিলাম সেই সময় হ'তে আমি জানি কংগ্রেসের কর্ম্মীরা কতদূর মাদক প্রথার উচ্ছেদ কামী, তাতে আমার বিশেষ অভিজ্ঞতা আছে। স্যার, যে সরকার গত বছরের বাজেটে এই আবগারী বিভাগের খরচ ১২ লক্ষ ৪৮ হাজার ২ শত টাকা বরাদ্দ কোরেছিলেন।

অন্যান্য বিভাগের মত এই বিভাগেরও খরচ কমান উচিত। স্যার, আমি একটা বিষয়ে বলবো ধর্ম্মের নামে এখানে অন্য দলের প্রভাব বিস্তার করবার চেষ্টা করা হয়েছে। আমি মুসলমানদের জানাই স্বয়ং হজরত একদিনে সমস্ত দুনিয়ায় ইস্‌লাম প্রচার কোরতে সমর্থ হন নাই। তাঁর নিজের জীবনে ১ লক্ষ মুসলমানও তিনি কোরতে পারেন নাই। আর এখন দুনিয়ায় মুসলমানের সংখ্যা কত হ'য়েছে? এখানেও বোধ হয় গুরু নানক, শ্রীকৃষ্ণ, প্রভৃতি যাঁরা ভারতে...যে কোন ধর্ম্ম প্রচার কোরেছেন তাঁরা কি একদিনে তাঁদের ধর্ম্ম প্রচার কোরতে পেরেছেন? তাঁদের সময় লেগেছে, আমাদের কংগ্রেসের বন্ধুগণ, যাঁরা ভারতের সাতটি প্রদেশের ক্ষমতা দখল কোরে শুধু ভারতবর্ষে নয় পৃথিবীতে একটি শক্তিশালী প্রতিষ্ঠান ব'লে দেখাবার চেষ্টা কোরছেন, তা ৫ বছর কিংবা ১০ বছরের চেষ্টায় হয় নাই। অনেক বছরের চেষ্টার ফলে কংগ্রেস বিরাট শক্তি অর্জ্জন কোরেছে, সেই হিসাবে যদি আমরা বিবেচনা করি তাহলে আমাদের বিবেচনা কোরতে হবে মাননীয় মৌলভী ফজলুল হকের Ministry র বয়স এখন পর্য্যন্ত বার মাসও নয়। তাঁর ভিতর এত অল্পদিনে একটা censure এই ক্যাবিনিটের উপর উপস্থিত করা কখন সঙ্গত হবে না। তাঁকে সময় দিতে হবে। যদি তিনি সেই সময়ে কাজ না কোরতে পারেন তাহোলে আমরা তাঁর বিরুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ করবো। আমরা জানি বাংলার ক্যাবিনিটের ভিতর যে ৬ জন মুসলমান আছেন তার মধ্যে মাননীয় ফজলুল হক, মাননীয় নাজিমুদ্দিনই হচ্ছেন——

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**MR. A. M. A. ZAMAN:** সভাপতি মহাশয়, বর্ত্তমানে এই প্রস্তাব নিয়ে যে নেতাদের ভিতর এবং বাহিরে খুব আলোচনা চোলছে এটা সত্যি কথা। এই আন্দোলন চোলবার কারণটা কি? হয়তো গোলাম সারওয়ার সাহেব নিজে একটুও বোঝেন নাই। আজকে প্রথমেই তিনি বোলেছেন যে কংগ্রেসের আয়ু অনেক দিন হয়েছে এবং আজকে যে সে এত বড় power ও position লাভ কোরেছে তা এক দিনে হয় নাই, কিন্তু আমি বোলতে চাই গোলাম সারওয়ার সাহেবকে কোরাণের কোন জায়গায় লেখা আছে যে মুহূর্ত্তে পাপ ব'লে কোন জিনিষকে জানা হয় সেই মুহূর্ত্তেই সে পাপকে নামাতে হবে না, আস্তে আস্তে নামাতে হবে, এটা কোরাণের কোন জায়গায় আছে?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmad is now convinced about the reason why I was saying that it would be desirable that discussion should take place only on merits. I hope Mr. Zaman will now confine his remarks to the merits only.

**Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY:** মিঃ স্পীকার, এ সম্বন্ধে আপনি যে ruling দিয়েছিলেন যদিও আমাদের দিক থেকে সে ruling মাথা নত কোরে মানা হয়েছে, কিন্তু তারপরই দেখা গেছে সুরাবর্দ্দী সাহেব নিজের ধর্ম্মের কথা বলেছেন। আর আমাদের দিক থেকে কোন disturbance হয় নাই। বিরুদ্ধ পক্ষ কথা বল্লেই যদি আপনার ruling অগ্রাহ্য করা হয় তাহলে ruling এর কোন অর্থ নাই।

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I was very carefully watching the debate. I cannot prevent a member if he says that it is not in the faith of a particular religion that certain thing should not be done and that is what the Maulana Sahib has said. I hope that as far as possible quotations from religious scriptures should be avoided as it generally leads to a controversy on religious subjects.

**Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN:** ধর্ম্মের সম্বন্ধে কথা তোলবার হয়তো দরকার পড়তো না। কিন্তু তারাই আগে ধর্ম্মের সম্বন্ধ তুলে আলোচনা কোরেছে সেজন্য আমারও ধর্ম্মের কথা বল্‌বার দরকার হয়েছে। আমি মৌলবী, মৌলানার কাছে শুনেছি পাপ কোরলে খোদাওন করিম পাপ না লিখে দুই দণ্ড পর্য্যন্ত অপেক্ষা করেন যে সেই পাপী তওবা করে কি না (noise and inturruption .....আজকে ওদের এক বছর আয়ু হয়েছে, তওবা করবার সময় আসা সত্বেও বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলী এখনো সেই তওবা করেন নাই।

(There were again interruptions from the Coalition Benches.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I would appeal to the Coalition Party that if they have got the interest of the Legislature at heart, they will kindly give primary consideration to the principle that however controversial may be the speech of a particular member, he is entitled to a hearing. It will set up a bad precedent and it would be impossible for any Speaker to function, if the majority party at least do not give a member of the minority party a patient hearing, however revolutionary his arguments may be and however undesirable he may be from their points of view. I appeal to you to remember that the fundamental right of a member is the freedom of his speech, but I think that by your action you are making the speech of Mr. Zaman impossible to be heard. I hope you will kindly desist from doing so and not be carried away by passion.

**Mr. AHMED HUSAIN:** We are not prepared to hear religious discourse from a layman.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Can you point out to me how I can shut out a member if he says that this is my version of the scripture. I hope you

will remember that this world is such a place that there is space for a worm and there is space for a big mighty tree. In this Assembly there is scope for everything.

**Khan Sahib Maulvi SYED MUHAMMAD AFZAL:** Do you like that we should hear all these things?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I hope when you speak you will contradict him but it is not desirable that he should be interrupted.

**Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BOSE:** May I point out that although it is not desirable to draw religion in our debate in this House, is it not a fact that we in this House have come from religious constituencies. Our very existence here is based on religion and therefore if any appeal is made in the name of religion I do not think it can be shut out on that ground.

**Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN:**

কাজেই আমি বোলছি—আমরা যে পাপের কথা জেনেছি, জেনে শুনে সে পাপ আমরা আর কোরতে চাই না। জেনে শুনে এই পাপের সহযোগী হতে পারি না। এই সম্বন্ধে মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয়কে নিমন্ত্রণ কোরছি, শ্রমিক এবং কৃষক অঞ্চলে যাবার জন্য। তাদের কি ভাবে এই পাপ দিনের পর দিন মৃত্যুর পথে টেনে নিয়ে যাচ্ছে, সেটা নিজের চোখে দেখতে পাবেন। আজকে রাত্রেই, যদি যান, দেখতে পাবেন শুঁড়ি খানা এবং তাড়ি খানার ধারে কত লোক যে সর্বস্ব খুইয়ে পড়ে আছে এবং তাদের ছেলে পিলে খেতে না পেয়ে ভিক্ষা করেও জীবিকা নির্বাহ কোরতে পারছে না। সে জায়গায়ও Minister বোলছেন কি না যে "আস্তে আস্তে থামাবো"।

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:**

আপনারা বন্ধ করবার জন্য চেষ্টা করুন।

**Mr. SPEAKER:** May I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy to the fact that my task becomes infinitely difficult if he also adds to my troubles.

**Mr. K. NOORUDDIN:** Can a member who has been declared by his community as an outcast speak in the name of his religion?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am not supposed to know as to who has been declared an outcast. I am functioning here under the Government of India Act and I think everybody has the freedom of speech.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHMEY:** On a point of order, Sir. The utterance of the hon'ble member is objectionable and we appeal to you to ask the member to withdraw his remarks.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** I draw your particular attention to the aspersion that has been cast on a member of my party. It is a very serious thing to say that he has been made on outcast and I hope you will kindly ask him to withdraw.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If there has been a reflection on any member, I would certainly ask the member who made it to withdraw.

(Cries of withdraw, withdraw.)

**Mr. K. NOORUDDIN:** Until any Muhammadan member from this side says that it is not a fact, I am not prepared to withdraw my remarks.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** You realise that whatever might have happened outside you cannot attribute any motive against any member on that ground as doing that would tantamount to a reflection on a member.

**Mr. K. NOORUDDIN:** A *fatwa* has been issued against him and I as a Muslim cannot withdraw. I would rather withdraw from the House if resired.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid I have to appeal to the Leader of the House to help me in such a position as to whether there has been a reflection on a member, and if so, whether it should not be withdrawn by a member of his party who has made it.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I will request my friend Mr. Nooruddin to withdraw.

**Mr. K. NOORUDDIN:** I withdraw the remark.

**Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN:** তাই আমি বোলছি, শ্রমিক মহলের কথা। আজকে প্রত্যেক জায়গায় আর একটা জিনিষ দেখতে পাবেন যদি সেখানে গিয়ে দাঁড়িয়ে কিছুকাল থাকেন, বিনা license এ প্রত্যেক কোয়ার্টারে তাদের কাছ থেকে ১২৲ টাকা কোরে ঘুষ নিয়ে রেখেছে এমনভাবে কতকগুলি খেজুর গাছ যা নাকি গভর্ণমেণ্টকে জানতেও দেয় না, আর এই সব বিক্রী করে প্রত্যেকের বাড়ী বাড়ী, প্রত্যেকের ঘরের কোনে কোনে আর শ্রমিকেরা নিজেদের সর্বস্ব বিকিয়ে দিচ্ছে এই সব স্থানে। তাই আমি বোলতে চাই, যদি আপনারা সত্যিকারের হিসাবে শ্রমিক ও কৃষকের দরদী হয়ে থাকেন তাহলে এখনি prohibition করা দরকার। মদ আর এদেশে চলতে পারবে না। সারওয়ার সাহেব বলেছেন, "আমি একজন কংগ্রেসকর্ম্মী ছিলাম।" কংগ্রেস এমনি একটা জিনিষ যে জিনিষ হজম করা অনেকের শক্তিতেই কুলে ওঠে না। অনেকেই সেই জন্য কংগ্রেস ছাড়েন এবং বিশেষ কোরে নিজের স্বার্থে যখনি ঘা লেগেছে সেই সময় অনেকেই সরে পড়েছেন।

আর একটা কথা আমি বোলতে চাই—যদি আজকে মুসলমান হিসাবে আপনারা এ বিষয়ে কিছু কোরতে চান মাননীয় ফজলুল হক সাহেবের যে appeal বেরিয়েছে—( noise and interruption —) সে সম্বন্ধে আপনাদের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ কোরছি। আজকে পায়ের জোরে

যদি কিছু কোরে যান, মনে রাখবেন, সেই কৃষক শ্রমিকদের কথা যাদের ভোটের জোরে সবাই এখানে এসেছেন। তাদের দিকে যদি তাকান তাহলে বিশেষ কোরে যা পাপ যা নাকি তাদের সর্বনাশের পথে নিয়ে যায় তাহতে অবশ্য আপনারা বিরত হবেন।

**Maulvi ABDUR RAZZAK:**

মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, অদ্যকার এই যে আবগারী বিভাগের বাজেট বিবেচনা নিয়ে পক্ষে এবং বিপক্ষে অনেক কথা বলা হয়েছে, আমি তা সমস্ত বিষয়ে উল্লেখ না কোরে কেবল আমার বন্ধু জামান সাহেব যা বোলেছেন, তিনি যে ধর্ম্মের কথা তুলেছেন তৎসম্বন্ধে কিছু বলবো, তিনি যে বোলেছেন কোরাণের কোন অংশে তা নাই। আমার বিশ্বাস কোরাণ তিনি অবগত নন। এই মাদক দ্রব্য ইসলামের প্রথম অবস্থায় থাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা ছিল ( and interruptions ) এবং খোদার যখন ইচ্ছে হলো সেটাকে বন্ধ করা তখন তাঁর এমন একটা শক্তি আছে যাদ্বারা তিনি ইচ্ছা কোল্লে এই মাদক দ্রব্যকেই একেবারে লোপ কোরতে পারতেন, কিন্তু তিনি ঐশ্বরিক শক্তির প্রয়োগ না কোরে মানবকে আদেশ কোল্লেন তোমরা নমাজের সময় মাদক দ্রব্য ব্যবহার করিও না। তাহার কিছুদিন পর optional ভাবে আদেশ করিলেন মাদক দ্রব্য পান করিও না, তাহলে তোমরা আমার প্রিয় পুত্র হবে, তারপরে মাদক দ্রব্যকে একেবারে বর্জ্জন compulsory করা হয়েছে।

আমাদের মন্ত্রিরা গত বাজেটের সময় বোলেছিলেন এটাকে আমরা বর্জ্জন করবো, তার নমুনা নোয়াখালিতে চালানো হয়েছে; এটাকে বর্জ্জন করা একদম হোতে পারে না, তারপরে আমার বন্ধুগণ বোলেছেন হারাম কাজ, অবৈধ কাজ, support করাও পাপ, আমি বোলছি সুদ খাওয়াও ত পাপ, কিন্তু Civil Court এর Munsiff দের বেতন, Clerk দের বেতন এবং অন্যান্য [illegible] বেতন মঞ্জুর কল্লেও ও সুদ খাওয়াকে মঞ্জুরী দেওয়া হয়, আর আপনারা নিজেরা সে দিনে এই House এ এই সব বেতন মঞ্জুরী দিয়েছেন। Co-operative Bank এর খরচ মঞ্জুর কোরেছেন, সেখানে ত কেবল সুদেরী ব্যবসা করা হয়। তা যদি আপনারা মঞ্জুর কোরতে পারেন ( hear, hear, laughter and noise ) এখন এই খরচ মঞ্জুর করতে কোন আপত্তি হইতে পারে বলিয়া আমার মনে হয় না। যদি আমি স্বীকারও করি মাদক দ্রব্য ব্যবহারে অনুমতি দেওয়া উচিত নয়। কিন্তু যদি এই cut motion support করা যায় তবে এই মুসলমানের মন্ত্রিত্ব ধ্বংশ হবে। যখন দুইটী অবৈধ কাজ একত্রিত হয় একটি আমাকে করতে হবে, সেই সময় যেটা সহজ, আসান সেইটা করতে হবে—আমাদের ধর্ম্মেও একথা বলেছে, এখন দেখা যায় যদি cut motion support করি তবে মন্ত্রিত্ব ধ্বংশ হয় তাহ'লে আমরা কোনটা কোরতে পারব না। সেজন্য আমরা মন্ত্রিত্ব support কোরতে বলি। তারপরে আমি বোলছি, আমি House এর মুসলমান সমাজকে এই রকম কাজ কোরতে হবে যে রকম খোদা বোলেছেন كه هم سيخ بر جا بود هم كباب কাজেই আমাদের কোরতে হবে যাতে মন্ত্রিদের ক্ষমতা বজায় থাকে সেইভাবে। আমার আর একটা কথা এই যে, এই যে cut motion ব্যাপারের উপর হারাম ফতোয়া দেওয়ার কি উদ্দেশ্য আছে এটা একটা ধর্ম্মের বিষয় নয় ( Interruption ) এই cut motion এর পিছনে কিছু ভাল উদ্দেশ্য আছে বোলে আমার মনে হয় না, এই motion আমার উদ্দেশ্য হলো কোন ব্যক্তির বিরুদ্ধে কাজ করা। আর একটা প্রমাণ বোলেই আমার বক্তব্য শেষ করবো।

Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Sir, I rise to extend my whole-hearted support to the motion so ably moved by my friend

Mr. Birendra Nath Majumdar. In doing so, I would take this belated opportunity to contradict some of the statements that were made by the Finance Minister in course of his speech in connection with the Excise Demand last August. It is unfortunate, Sir, that we have no right of reply in connection with such motions. Had we not been deprived of the right of reply, I would have taken the earliest opportunity to contradict the statements at the time when they were made. Now, Sir, this is what the Finance Minister said on the last occasion. "My friend Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri derided the remark in our Red Book that Bengal's excise revenue was the lowest in India. We stated only a fact." I venture to say again it is not a fact that Bengal yields the lowest excise revenue. The total excise revenue of Bengal stands next, if I remember aright, to those of Bombay and Madras. Bengal yields a larger excise revenue than Bihar and the Punjab, and even a higher revenue than the United Provinces. It is therefore not a fact that Bengal yields the lowest excise revenue in India." Then, Sir, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister proceeded to propound a theory of his own. He said "it is enjoined by the Muhammadan religion that Muhammadans should not drink and the Punjab and Bengal, being predominantly Muhammadan, the excise revenue"—I interrupted him with a question:—What about Bihar and the United Provinces? The Hon'ble the Finance Minister said in reply, that in "Bihar and the United Provinces it is not so low." As he was confusing the House, I put in another interjection—I enquired, "May I know what the Finance Minister means by low—does he mean the incidence of revenue per head of population in the United Provinces? Then the Hon'ble Mr. Sarker in a temper continued "every day I find my friend Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri challenging my figures, but I can say that my figures are quite correct. I say that the excise revenue is low *per capita*, etc.". This, again is not a wholly correct statement, it is only partly correct so far as Bengal goes, but it is wholly incorrect with reference to the Punjab. Now, Sir, permit me to refer to the incidence of excise revenue in these provinces. It will be seen on referring to the statistical abstract for British India that the incidence per head of excise revenue is four annas three pies in the United Provinces, five annas one pie in Bihar, and as much as six annas two pies in the Punjab. This is, Sir, what I have to say as regards the statements made by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

I now proceed to the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Excise on that occasion. He said that "Bengal is proud that it is the most temperate province in India"; then he continued "the consumption of country liquor is the lowest in this province and it has been steadily going lower and lower still." This statement, again, is a mis-statement inasmuch as the revenue from country liquor is not going lower and lower still.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Not revenue but consumption.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** But at any rate the Report does not say so. Let me know quote from the Excise Administration Report for the year 1935-36: There it is said that consumption under the head "Country spirit" increased by 50,145 London Proof Gallons in the year under report, 1935-36, in comparison with what it was in the year 1933-34. Then, again, consumption of *pachwai* in terms of maunds of rice amounted to 1,36,427 maunds as against 1,13,702 maunds in the course of the previous year. So, Sir, we had a higher consumption under the head "Country spirit". Let me now proceed to the other allied matters. It is widely known that Bengal is the worst sinner in opium and other drugs. Bengal leads in opium revenue, and it is almost the runner up, the second best I mean, in other drugs. Here let me refer again to the report for 1935-36. It is said that consumption of opium during the year under report was 642 maunds, 39 seers as compared to 652 maunds, 11 seers. It was less only by about 10 maunds. But what steps did Government take to see that consumption grew less and less? Well, the total number of licenses issued for retail sale was 906 in 1935-36 as compared to 896 in the previous year. The number of licenses increased. That indicates that Government offered more facilities for consumption of opium. I would again draw the attention of the House to the statement that was once made in the House of Commons by Earl Winterton as Under-Secretary of State for India in 1925-26. He said that in India the duty on opium was increased by 50 per cent. and as a result consumption dropped to one-third of the amount that was consumed in 1911-12. That figure was not a correct figure, and that statement was not even correct so far as Bengal was concerned for the year 1935-36. Last August the Hon'ble Minister in charge said that in 1935-36 the total consumption of opium was 28,000 seers as against 67,000 in 1911-12. So, we see that consumption had not been reduced by two-thirds even in the year 1935-36. There is ample justification therefore for our Government to proceed with a prohibition policy in right earnest. If you really believe that Bengal is the soberest province in the whole of India, why should you not sincerely launch a prohibition scheme and take your rightful place as the leader of the prohibitionists among the Indian provinces?

(Here the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

**Maulana MD. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI:** মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, আমাদের মুসলমান সভ্যদের মধ্যে যাঁহারা Assembly তে প্রবেশ করিয়াছি তাঁহারা যে শুধু ভারতবাসী হিসাবে বা বাংলার অধিবাসী হিসাবে এখানে আসিয়াছি তাহা নয়। বরং

আমরা মুসলমান হিসাবেই এখানে আসিয়াছি। মুসলমানের vote লইয়া মুসলমানের ধর্ম্ম রক্ষা এবং দেশের স্বার্থ রক্ষার জন্যই এখানে আসিয়াছি। সুতরাং আমরা Assembly র House এ প্রবেশ করিবার সময় আমাদের মুসলমানের সংস্কার লইয়া প্রবেশ করিয়াছি। মোছলেম সংস্কার ও বিশ্বাস ছাড়িয়া দিয়া এখানে আসিতে পারি নাই। সেই সংস্কার নিয়েই এখানে আসতে হবে। মাদকদ্রব্য আমাদের ধর্ম্মমতে হারাম ও নিষিদ্ধ। যাহা হারাম তাহা ব্যবহার করা, বেচা, বিক্রয় করার কোন ব্যবস্থাই সমর্থনীয় হইতে পারে না। এমন কি একজন সাহাবির বিরুদ্ধে (সচ্চরের) বিরুদ্ধে অভিযোগ ছিল যে, তাঁহার বাড়ীতে সরাব আছে। তাঁহার নাম তাবেক এবনে সোবেদ্। হজরৎ তাঁহাকে জিজ্ঞাসা করিয়াছিলেন, "তোমার বাড়ীতে সরাব আছে কিনা? তিনি উত্তরে বলিয়াছিলেন—আছে, কিন্তু ঔষধের জন্য, 'দা'য়ার' জন্য। ' হজরৎ তদুত্তরে তাঁহাকে বলিয়াছিলেন, ওটা 'দাওয়া' অর্থাৎ ঔষধ নয়,—ওটা 'দা' অর্থাৎ পীড়া। ঔষধের জন্য রাখিয়াও উক্ত সাহাবী নিস্তার পান নাই; সরাবকে হজরৎ 'দাউন' অর্থাৎ পীড়া বলিয়া ব্যাখ্যা করিয়াছিলেন।" ভারতবর্ষে ' বা বাংলাদেশে এমন কোন মুসলমান নাই যারা ধর্ম্মতঃ কোন রকম মাদকদ্রব্যের বেচা বিক্রয়ের প্রশ্রয় দিতে পারেন। যাহা ধর্ম্মবিরুদ্ধ, যাহা হারাম, যদি কোন মুসলমান তাহাতে কাহাকেও লিপ্ত দেখে তাহা হইলে যদি শক্তি থাকে বাহুবলে সেটা দূর করিবে। সেরূপ শক্তি যদি না থাকে, তবে মৌখিক প্রতিবাদ করিতে হইবে। সে শক্তি ও যদি না থাকে—অন্তরের সঙ্গে সেই পাপকে ঘৃণা কোরতে হবে। এই অবস্থায়, আমার বিশ্বাস, কোন মুসলমান ইস্‌লাম যদি তার মধ্যে থাকে, মুসলমান ব'লে যদি সে নিজেকে ভাবে, অগ্রপশ্চাৎ বিবেচনা না করিয়া সেই মুহূর্ত্তে, যেটা পাপ, যেটা হারাম, তাহাতে যথাসাধ্য বাধা দিতে হইবে। যতটা শক্তি আছে, সমস্ত শক্তি প্রয়োগ করিয়া উক্ত গর্হিত কার্য্যের প্রতিরোধ করিতে হইবে। ইহাই হইতেছে মুসলমানের বিশ্বাস ও এছলামের শিক্ষা।

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** Sir, I admit with very great regret that we have not been able to do anything in the matter of prohibition except that Government have decided in the next financial year to make experiments in one or two districts. Sir, my friend the honourable Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri has found out some mistake in the figures given in my statement last year. The figures were supplied to me by the Secretariat staff and I do not want to grudge Mr. Rai Chaudhuri his satisfaction in competing with Secretariat officials. But so far as my statement is concerned, I say, I am correct, correct in the sense that in Bengal the problem of drink evil is not so ruinous and so pressing that we must put this in the forefront of our programme. Sir, my contention obtained support in the election manifestoes of the Praja and League Parties. I have searched their election manifestoes and I do not find, at any place anywhere in the long catalogue of things to be done, the subject of prohibition. Hence, I think they did not include this because it is not so pressing in Bengal as in other big provinces. Sir, I want to read certain figures which have been collected by efficient officers of the Secretariat. On the budget figures of the current year the yield from excise revenue *per capita* is as follows: Bengal, ·29, the Central Provinces ·41, the Punjab ·44 Madras ·83, Bombay 1·65. And if we turn to the bordering provinces of Assam and Bihar we find that

the figure for Assam is ·41 and for Bihar ·31. On that basis I say that the drink evil is not so pressing in Bengal as in other provinces. I shall try to prove it by other figures also—

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** That is a different matter.

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** If that be a different matter, I do not want to quarrel with Mr. Rai Chaudhuri, but I am placing my point for whatever it is worth. In the rural areas of this province one country spirit shop serves on an average an area of 103 square miles, as against 47 square miles in Bombay, 26 square miles in Madras, and 46 square miles in Bihar. In some areas, where the population is predominantly Mahomedan, the number of square miles served thereby is much greater than the average. Thus in the Dacca Division it is 180 square miles and in the Chittagong Division 284 square miles. I do not say there is no need for prohibition, but what I want to impress upon the House is that we have not put prohibition as the first item in our programme for the League and Praja Parties who are the supporters of this Government want to push forward those matters first for which they are pledged to their constituencies. We are trying to give effect to that programme, but in doing so, we do not say that we shall not give effect to prohibition. We shall make experiments in one or two districts next year, and in this matter we are in good company, because prohibition is one of the important programmes of the Congress and in all the Congress Provinces except in Madras, the prohibition programme will be given effect to after 1st April, 1938. None of the provinces except Madras, and that also in one district, have taken that up and although in their election programme they have said that it will be given effect to, they are all doing it next year. We are also doing it next year.

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** In which district please?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** I will reply.

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** Then, Sir, one of the speakers has said that we have not only not done anything to effect prohibition, but as a matter of fact our revenue has been increased. Sir, to that speaker I reply, let him look to the budget figures of the Madras Government where for the last whole year or six months at least they tried their level best to effect prohibition in Salem District, and that was done by no less a man than Mr. C. Rajagopala Chariar whose influence throughout the country is so much that his word is law in that district, and in spite of six months' trial

in prohibition, their reveune, so far as revised estimates are concerned for the current year, has been increased by 15½ lakhs, and in every province I have scrutinized the speeches of the Finance Minister. In those provinces where they want to introduce prohibition next year, every Finance Minister has said that they will do it gradually district by district, and in Bombay also, which is a strong Congress Province, they have not begun prohibition in the Bombay City mill areas where the liquor habit is most excessive and persistent. They have all begun with district areas.

My friend Mr. Zaman, a labour member, has said that in the labour area there is illicit distillation going on, yet the Government has not done anything. My friend is a member returned from the labour constituency, and he ought to look to the interests of the labour constituency. If he sees that there is anything unlawful going on there, it is his duty to bring it to the notice of the Government. Sir, my friend has not done so yet.

Then another member has said that we have increased our expenditure on Excise Department. That is so, because of additional police officer to stop illicit distillation as has been discovered in the Gariahata Excise Case. That is why we had to increase our staff to stop all these illicit distillations.

Sir, one point that I want to bring to the notice of this House is that it is being said that on religious grounds the Muhammadans should not vote on this item. Sir, I have taken some pains to look to the year books of Egypt and Turkey, and I find, Sir, that they have large amount of excise revenue in those countries, though they are predominently Muhammadan. And what are Congress friends insisting on? They also do not say that prohibition should be effected within one year. Even in the Congress Provinces they are doing it gradually district by district, and if there is prohibition in one district, in the rest of the province excise activity will be going on, and they have to vote for the maintenance of the staff for those districts; so, if there is at all a conflict with the tenets of religion, it will be there even if one or two districts go dry. If you want prohibition—

(The Hon'ble Minister having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** Sir, I will be very brief in enunciating the policy of this department, and I hope the Hon'ble Mr. Sarker has replied to the various points suitably.

Sir, at the previous session, a definite view was expressed in this Assembly, and the Hon'ble Chief Minister was pleased to declare that total prohibition is the ultimate goal of the excise policy of this Province, and that as a beginning, experiment in prohibition will be

undertaken in one or two selected areas. These were the very words he declared on the floor of this House. Sir, he also undertook to make use of the Publicity Department of Government in order to encourage propaganda in favour of prohibition. In response to the above pronouncement, Government have decided to enforce prohibition of alcoholic beverages in the district of Noakhali as an experimental measure and we will do it from the 1st April 1938. The Publicity Department have also undertaken to encourage propaganda by approved non-official agencies in favour of total abstinence from liquor and drugs. Indulgence in alcohol and drugs should be discouraged by all means, but it is not possible within a short interval to change the habits and customs of hundreds and thousands of people. Particular regard has had to be paid to the customs of the aboriginals among whom drinking is a social and religious custom.

In a campaign of prohibition, persuasion must be tried first of all as a preliminary to compulsion and the display of force should be avoided as far as possible. Much will depend upon the success of the propaganda to educate the public in temperance.

As excise provides an important source of provincial revenue, the policy of prohibition entails grave financial implications. New sources of revenue must be found to offset the loss to the existing excise revenue as well as to meet the considerable extra cost of the preventative organizations required to enforce prohibition. Until some new source of revenue can be found, there will be a heavy deficit in the finances of this Province. Such a deficit would handicap Government by reducing the amount of money available for nation building services and schemes. It would be a deplorable alternative if in trying to implement a policy of prohibition, some of the important constructive schemes have to be suspended or sacrificed. The financial side of the problems therefore calls for most careful study, and it is hoped that the legislature will accord Government adequate time and opportunity to study this all important aspect of the question before asking them to launch such an ambitious programme towards the goal of prohibition. Some time should be allowed for studying the working of the experiment in the district of Noakhali. In the meantime, the present Government may be permitted to maintain the policy of minimum consumption with maximum revenues. The present policy imposes an effective restriction which serve the cause of temperance by limiting consumption to the minimum requirements. If consumption is principally restricted, there is a grave risk that illicit manufacture of liquor which has in recent years increased to an alrming extent, may assume unmanageable proportions.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, in bringing this debate to a close, I wish to emphasize one or two points to which reference

has been made by my colleague the Finance Minister. In the first place, prohibition was not an item in the party programme either of the Proja Party or of the League. The reason, Sir, is very obvious. We, who stand here for ameliorating the condition of the masses, know very well that our masses either Hindu or Moslem never touch even a drop of drink and the prohibition of drink among the poor masses of Bengal is not from that point of view a crucial point of the problem of the day. It is only the middle class from which the members of the various political bodies are drawn who indulge in drink (laughter). So far as the masses are concerned, it is neither necessary nor is it called for, that any particular attention should be given to prohibition at the expense of carrying out other important items in our programme. Next Sir, it has been said that we announced a policy of total prohibition but did nothing. It is not a fact. Not only did we select a district but I can tell the House, that immediately after the decision was taken in August, early in October we had been in communication with the district authorities, and we have been trying to encourage voluntary workers in the work of carrying out the policy of prohibition and popularising prohibition in the districts. We have warned the people that from the 1st of April, 1938, they would have to put up with a policy of total prohibition in the districts. The reason why I selected Noakhali for the prohibition of liquor is not on account of its unimportance as regards the low consumption of liquor there but for various other obvious reasons. Whenever you take up a programme of prohibition in a district you have to guard the frontier in order that there may not be any illicit traffic from the adjoining district. Noakhali is very favourably situated in this respect. On one side there is the river Meghna on the other side there is the Bay of Bengal, and you have got to protect only one boundary and the part of another boundary, and it will be less expensive at the same time. This I admit, and, therefore, Sir, this place is very favourably situated for guaranteeing experiment in prohibition. If this experiment at all fails, we will secede from that, but we will not stop and we will not go on without prohibition. But we are not going to stop here. From Noakhali we will pass on to Chittagong. Chittagong is also another district which is favourably situated for prohibition; from that, Sir, we go to Comilla and then take up in this way the whole of the Chittagong division and work and see how far prohibition succeeds. Therefore, we have not broken our promises, but we have made good the promises we made, and I can assure this House that I am honestly and the Excise Department is honestly trying to see how far this experiment in prohibition succeeds. Sir, I would say only one word to Mr. Zaman to correct him when he says that prohibition was enforced all at once in the earliest revelation in Quoran. It was merely on the principle that drink is an abomination like a game of chance, and so far as the next prohibition was concerned it is that the Muslims should not stand up for their

prayer in a spirit of intoxication but even then, there was no prohibition. It was only at a later stage that a total prohibition came. Therefore, even in the injunction of Quoran, prohibition came only by slow degrees. Therefore, there is nothing extraordinary when we have not been able to bring in prohibition all at once. Nobody has done so in this world. I am confident that where Islam did not succeed, nobdy else can succeed. Sir, except Madras where the drink problem is so acute that there are about one country shop for every 20 square miles. No other Congress province has started prohibition except of course, Bihar and Orissa. In Orissa the Prime Minister has asked me for a message to be read out on the 1st of April for the encouragement of prohibition. I have also asked him to give us a message on the 1st of April. Roughly speaking, both the provinces are going to take to prohibition at the same time. Such being the case, there is no case made out I hope, Sir, to say that we have been sleeping over the matter. And I submit, Sir, that this cut motion with its insistent and great appeal to the Muslim religion and the teachings of the Quoran have behind it only a political move to split the Muslims, though the mover's desire may be that a certain policy should be carried out. Sir, the majority of the Muslim members of this House can see through the game and they are not going to be misled, and they know very well that better results cannot be achieved in this direction than what they can get at the hands of the present Government. Sir, I do not wish to take up the time of the House any longer, but I wish to submit that attempts have been made to cloud the issue and mislead the Muslims, and I hope the Muslims, the majority of them, viz., three-fourth of them will show that they are not going to be misled. (Loud Applause.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** May I request the members before I put the cut motion to the vote, that they would kindly go to their respective seats during the time the Division bell is ringing.

The cut motion of Dr. H. C. Mukherjee that the demand under the head "8—Provincial Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The cut motion of Mr. Birendra Nath Mazumdar that the demand under the head "8—Provincial Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarker that the demand under the head "8—Provincial Excise" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and a division claimed.

**(When the House was dividing several members drew the attention of Mr. Speaker to alleged canvassing.)**

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Sir, Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarker is canvassing among the scheduled caste members.

**Mr. M. A. H. ISPAHANI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, canvassing is going on near this door. May I name the member, Sir?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No, not now.

**Mr. M. A. H. ISPAHANI:** Sir, I would again draw your attention to the fact that canvassing is going on.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I hope that there will be no canvassing in that corner.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The House is divided, but I propose to check the division list once again because there is said to be a slight difference in calculation of the opposition Whip. Of course it does not substantially affect the result.

**AYES.**

Abdul Hafeez, Khan Bahadur Syed.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed.
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Acharyya Choudhury, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Aftab Ali, Mr.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Banerjee, Dr. Suresh Chandra.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerjee, Mr. Sibnath.
Banerji, Mr. Satya Priya.
Banerjee, Mr. Manoranjan.
Barma, Babu Promhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhowmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Bose, Mr. Sarat Chandra.
Chakraborty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chakraborty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Mahim Chandra.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das, Mr. Manmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Babu Khagendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Mr. Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Deloi, Mr. Harendra.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Dutta Mazumdar, Mr. Niharendu.
Emdadul Haque, Kazi.
Fazlur Rahman Muktear, Mr.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Giasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Mr.
Goswami, Mr. Tulsi Chandra
Gupta, Mr Jobesh Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hasan Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Syed.
Himatsingka, Mr. Prabhudayal.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khaitan, Mr. Debi Prosad.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Mafizuddin, Ahmed Dr.
Maiti, Mr. Nikunja Behari.
Maitra, Mr. Surendra Mohan.
Maji, Mr. Advaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mazumdar, Mr. Birendra Nath.
Mal, Mr. Iswar Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Manirazzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hossain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Mr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Moulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukerjii, Dr. H. C.

Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan Sahib, Mr.
Naskar, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Pal, Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Kumar Shib Shekhareswar.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Kishori Pati.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Rai Bahadur Kshirod Chandra.
Sanaullah, Al-Haj Maulana Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Nagendra Nath.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr. M.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tamizuddin Khan, Maulvi.
Thakur, Mr. Promatha Rabjan.
Yousuf Mirza.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

## NOES.

AbdubAziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Bari, Maulvi.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hafiz Mia, Mr.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr.
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Mr. Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Jabbar Palwan, Mr. Md.
Abdul Kader, Mr.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Maulvi.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur, A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Sahib Maulvi S.
Abdur Rauf, Mr. Shah.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abidur Reza Chowdhury, Khan Bahadur.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain, Mr. Ahmed.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Aftab Hossain Joardar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Aminullah, Maulvi.
Amir Ali, Md. Mia.
Anderson, Mr. J. P.
Ashrafali, Mr. M.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Maulvi.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Bannerman, Mr. H. C.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Brasher, Mr. F. C.
Campbell, Sir George.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Crosfield, Mr. L. M.
Das, Mr. Anukul Chandra.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bana Khanam, Begam.
Fazlul Huq, the Hon'ble Mr. A. K.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Gomes, Mr. S. A.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Habibullah, the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hafizuddin Chowdhury, Maulvi.
Hamiuddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hamilton, Mr. K. A.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F.
Homan, Mr. F. T.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Mr.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Sahib.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi.
Mafizuddon Choudhury, Maulvi.
Maguire, Mr. L. T.
Mahtabuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur.
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Millar, Mr. C.
Milne-Robertson, Mr. C. E. L.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C. I. E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Sahib Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Dr. Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagswal Haque, Mr. Syed.
MacGregor, Mr. G. G.
Nandy, the Hon'ble Maharaja Sris Chandra, of Kasimbazar.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nausher Ali, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K. C. I. E.

Noeruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Patton, Mr. W. C.
Paul, Sir Hari Sankar.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Raikat, the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Ray Choudhury, Mr. Birendra Kishore.
Razzar Rahman Khan, Mr.
Rees, Mr. J. D.
Roy, Babu Patiram.
Roy, the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiuddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarker, Babu Madhusudan.
Sarker, the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan.
Sassoon, Mr. R. M.
Shahabuddin, Mr. Khwaja.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khandkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Singha, Babu Kshudra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahar Rahman, Maulvi.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 97 and Noes 133, the motion was lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut that a sum of Rs. 19,40,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "8—Provincial Excise" was then put and agreed to.

## "5—Salt."

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 2,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Salt."

**Mr. HARENDRA KUMAR SUR:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,000 under the head "5—Salt" be reduced by Rs. 100, to raise a discussion about the policy of the Government with respect to the development of salt industry in Bengal and the inadequacy of the grant.

Sir, Bengal has got enough sources of salt-supply which require only development for the purpose of reviving the salt industry of Bengal on a sound commercial basis.

The saliferous area extends over a distance of 445 miles on the east coast from Balasore to Chittagong. Not long ago Bengal had a flourishing salt industry which enabled the province to produce its entire requirements for salt.

Under the British Administration the East India Company first of all monopolised the trade and subsequently monopolised the production as well. But the Company at last stopped manufacture to find market for salt imported from Liverpool and other foreign countries into Bengal. The local manufacturers continued for some time but the local production could not compete with the imported foreign salt. The Government played the part of a silent spectator, and the salt industry of Bengal gradually collapsed to complete extinction.

Since then for more than half a century Bengal is dependent on foreign countries and other provinces in the matter of salt-supply. It has to import 1½ crore maund of salt annually from outside and the annual drainage from the pockets of the poor consumers of Bengal would be nearly 3 to 4 crores of rupees.

This is why in the year 1931, when the Salt Industry Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the basis of the reports prepared by the Tariff Board and the Salt Survey Committee came to the conclusion that conditions of manufacture and sale of salt in India justified the levy of an additional duty of 4 annas 6 pies per maund of foreign salt imported into India, Bengal made a strong protest and the Bengal Legislative Council and most of the representatives of Bengal in the Central Legislature vehemently opposed the imposition of a further duty. It was stated in the report of the Salt Industry Committee that the proceeds of the additional duty would be ear-marked for certain specified objects, one of which was the investigation of the possibility of development of sources of supply in Bengal, Behar and Orissa including actual experiments in suitable methods of manufacture. The Committee further recommended that a share of the realisation from this duty would be handed over to the provinces which would have to bear the burden of this additional duty. The Legislative Assembly accepted the recommendations of the Committee and the Salt Additional Import Duty Act was passed. It was stated at the time that it would not be absolutely without any benefit to the province inasmuch as Bengal would have a share of the realisation from this duty and this would be utilised for exploring the avenues for development of the salt industry in Bengal. No doubt, this was meant as a consolation to the people of Bengal and a section of the public thought that it would not be altogether a bad bargain to bear the burden for some time because they sincerely believed that the Government of Bengal would take the initiative in reviving the dead industry of Bengal and ultimately Bengal would be completely independent of other countries to meet its requirements for salt supply. Some joint-stock companies, one in Chittagong, one in Noakhali, two in Midnapore, one in 24-Parganas and other coastal districts of Bengal were organised with the object of manufacture of salt in the hope that the Government would render substantial help in their enterprise. No doubt, these concerns were granted license, but when they approached the Government for substantial help, they were driven from pillar to post and from post to pillar but to no purpose. On the other hand, the Government of Bengal sought to create, by way of propaganda, an impression in the minds of the people of Bengal that manufacture of salt on a commercial scale in Bengal would not be profitable. They based their propaganda on the report of Mr. C. H. Pitt, a northern India Government expert who was appointed by the Government of India to investigate into the possibilities of salt manufacture in Bengal. But even

Mr. Pitt was bound to admit that "there does not appear to be sufficient evidence immediately to state that the manufacture of any kind would be commercially unprofitable". On the contrary, Mr. Pitt suggested that one or more experimental factories might be established to test the possibilities of manufacture by the old process combining solar and artificial evaporation and he also laid down the points for determination by experiment. He was in favour of leaving the administration and management of the experimental factories entirely in private hands subsidy or assistance being given by Government in respect of installation of these factories.

Another Government expert Mr. T. R. Ayengar, Assistant Commissioner of Salt and Customs, Madras, whose experience on the subject extends over a period of 30 years, was appointed by the Government of India to enquire into the possibilities of development of salt industry in Bengal. He came to Bengal on special duty in 1934 and held the investigation and submitted his report to the Government of India explaining in full the possibilities of salt-production in Bengal and recommended a *via media* system between Madras and Burma. He is strongly of opinion that the coastal districts of Bengal afford ample scope for the expansion of the salt industry on a commercial scale and in the course of a few years Bengal can be made self-supporting in the matter of salt-supplies.

The Government did not undertake any experiments whatsoever to find out which process would suit best the climatic conditions of Bengal for the purpose of salt-manufacture nor did they render any help to these private concerns in starting experimental factories for the same purpose beyond mere granting of licence.

Government could have helped these concerns by granting lease of khas mahal lands free of salami and on nominal rent. During the experimental period, Government could have given facilities to the concerns to get land at a cheaper cost. Government could have borne the initial expenses for the establishment of experimental factories and the cost of supervision by expert could have been borne out of the fund assigned to the Provincial Government from time to time by the Central Government.

Sir, the Government of Bengal receive so far more than Rs. 16 lakhs from 1931 onwards on condition that this money should be applied to the development of salt production wherever economically feasible within the province.

May I ask the Government how these contributions made from time to time by the Central Government have been appropriated, and whether any portion of these contributions had been utilised for the purpose for which they were meant. These are most pertinent questions which require answer from Government.

Of course it may be said that the present Government is not responsible for the indifference or apathy of their predecessors, but the House had the privilege of discussing the budget for the current year during the last session. In that budget Rs. 59,000 was shown as the estimated receipt under this head but not a farthing was allotted for the purpose for which the contribution was expected. The budget now under consideration for the coming year shows that a paltry sum of Rs. 2,000 has been allotted to the Chittagong Trading Company, Limited, and this sum has been earmarked by the Central Government. Is there any indication in these two budgets that the Government do realise the importance of the salt problem in Bengal? Let us take a glance at the achievement of the Government of Burma. The Government of Burma started an experimental factory and a Chemical Laboratory at Pangha in the Amherst district and carried on experiments between the years 1920-23 and successfully demonstrated that in Burma salt could be profitably manufactured on a commercial scale and as a result of the impetus given to this industry in Burma we find that as many as 350 factories are working there and they are in a position to meet the requirements of Burma to a considerable extent. Seven long years have gone by and we now stand exactly in the same position where we had been in the year 1931 regarding this problem because of the apathy and callous indifference of the Government. I wish to refer to a particular instance of indifference of the local authorities. I am connected with the Singhagarh Trading and Farming Company, Limited, which was organised with the object of manufacturing salt in the district of Noakhali. Licence was granted to this concern in the name of Nagendra Kumar Singha, one of the partners of the concern and Babu Srinath Ghose carried on experiments in the island of Sandwip for the last two or three years. I submit as a result of the experiments a letter was addressed to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister of the present Government asserting that salt can be manufactured in the district of Noakhali on a commercial scale and at a profit and the result was that the District Magistrate, Noakhali, asked him why the licence should not be cancelled. While we expect that there should encouragement I find that the Company was being threatened that its licence would be cancelled.

With these few words I commend the motion for the consideration of the House and if the House supports this motion it will be in a position to bring about a change in the policy of the Government from one of indifference and apathy to one of determination to tackle the salt problem of Bengal.

**Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** I beg to move that the demand for a sum of Rs. 2,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" be reduced by Rs. 100, for failure to popularise the salt industry in Bengal.

Bengal consumes about two crore maunds of salt and history will tell you that before the advent of the British Government, Bengal was self-supporting in respect of salt supply. From Midnapore to Cox's Bazar in all the sea coast panga salt was being manufactured while rock salt was manufactured in Upper India. Panga salt was supplied up to Allahabad. After the East India Company established their hold in Bengal they got the monopoly of salt and this salt is one of the substances for which Bengal was transferred from the hands of the Muhammadans to the British Government. After the fall of the last Nawab of Bengal, Lord Clive practically established the monopoly of salt and subsequently by degrees the British began to import foreign salt to Bengal. And by the middle of the 19th century practically the salt industry of Bengal was destroyed. Things continued like this but during the war when it was found difficult to import foreign salt to Bengal, one of the Calcutta companies, I think, Messrs. Andrew Yule & Co., tried to manufacture salt in the district of Midnapore, but it is reported that foreign interest practically stopped the adventure by compensating them adequately. A few Indian companies have subsequently taken licenses, but there are difficulties in their way. It is reported that the Irrigation Department and the Forest Department are putting some obstacles. The Forest Department are not supplying timber at cheap rates and the Irrigation Department are disturbing their work by raising bunds or in some cases not allowing them to erect bunds of sufficient height so that they may get salt water in large quantity. In 1931 additional import duty was imposed on foreign salt and in Bengal the highest amount of tax was collected.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** It is really a great pleasure for me to announce to this House that salt can be manufactured in Bengal, but we want to examine and make a comprehensive survey of the whole case first of all and then we have got to take up this matter very carefully and run the business in a business-like way. I have received reports from the Commissioner of Excise and Salt from which I find that so far these concerns have not been run in a businesslike way.

I do not like to take up much time of the House, but this much I can say that I have deputed two officers of the Forest and Salt Department, namely, Rai Sahib D. N. Mukharji and Mr. Rao to investigate in the Sundarbans whether salt can be manufactured on a commercial scale and I am expecting their report very shortly. Whatever is possible for this Government to do in regard to this matter will be done.

The motion of Babu Harendra Kumar Sur that the demand under the head "5—Salt" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar that the demand under the head "5—Salt" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut that a sum of Rs. 2,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" was then put and agreed to.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** May I know, Sir, what is the result of the scrutiny of the Division List?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Thank you for reminding me. It has been scrutinised by the Whip of the Congress Party and it has been found to be perfectly all right.

**"43—Industries—Cinchona."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,45,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Cinchona".

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,45,000 under the head "43—Industries—Cinchona" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise discussion on the quinine policy of Government, and on the present arrangements regarding cinchona plantation, manufacture of cinchona products and their sale and distribution.

Sir, the importance of a subject like this can be hardly overestimated. We are all aware of the toll that malaria is taking in Bengal. Nearly 4 lakhs of lives are lost annually due to this fell scourge. Nearly 33 per cent. of the total deaths of Bengal per annum are due to malaria and nearly 60 per cent. of the population appear to suffer from that disease. It is estimated that the incidence of malaria is one of the highest in Bengal. When we compare the figures of the whole world as well as of India vis-a-vis Bengal: we find that the world average is only ·6 per cent. whereas Bengal's average works out to 1·4 per cent. Moreover, the economic loss due to this disease is staggering. Experts agree on all hands that the only effective manner in which malaria can be controlled is through the extensive use of quinine both for prevention as well as for cure. We have a good deal of leeway to make up in Bengal in this respect. Whereas the consumption of quinine per head per annum is 24 grains in Greece, 16 grains in Italy, it is only 3·5 grains in India as a whole on an average in the infected areas; and in some of the worst affected parts of Bengal

the average consumption of quinine works out at only 1·7 grains per head. It does not need any argument to prove that with such poor arrangements and low dosage of quinine per capita malaria can hardly be controlled.

The policy of Government needs examination in the light of this failure of the department so far to supply quinine cheaply to the largest possible extent, to the poor as well as to those who cannot afford it, by sale or through distribution. Government have failed to increase substantially the consumption of quinine per head of population, in spite of more than 75 years of attempts at cinchona plantation. The latest report on the 75th year's working has been just published and no departure from the old policy is noticeable. We urge Government to take bold measures to see that quinine is made available at considerably reduced prices to the peasantry of Bengal and at no price whatever to those who cannot afford to pay. We urge Government to undertake a systematic campaign to educate the people in the proper use of quinine both before they fall a victim to malaria as well as after they are attacked, and we implore Government to utilise all the forces that official and non-official agencies have in their respective hands to see that larger quantities of quinine are forthwith sent to those areas from which reports of malaria come during the seasons.

I understand and realise that Government have got certain handicaps in the way. I have my sympathies. I do not desire to underestimate the difficulties, but I want Government to be bold enough to handle the situation and to remove the handicaps. The first handicap is due to the slow progress in the plantations and in quinine production. The plantations need extension immediately and without the slightest delay, because the plants take about 5 to 6 years to grow before barks can be taken. Progress so far has been very slow, and in spite of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture as early as 1928, nothing practically was done before 1935 to extend cinchona cultivation. The Royal Commission on Agriculture recorded the view that both for the prevention and treatment of malaria a much larger distribution of quinine is necessary. They also laid down a programme for achieving the above. In an article contributed by my humble self to the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" of Sunday, the 9th January, 1938, I dealt extensively with this problem and I put forward my constructive suggestions in that connection. I request the Hon'ble Minister to see if he or his department can make any use of my suggestions.

The second handicap appears to be that about 2/3rds of India's requirement of quinine are imported from Java, the price whereof is controlled by a powerful Dutch Organisation, called the Dutch Kina Bureau, and Government feels that the cheapening of quinine in competition with Dutch Kina Bureau might be dangerous for the

industry locally, and the benefit of the cheapness of the price to any large extent may not reach the actual peasants or the rural areas, but may be taken advantage of merely by middlemen. I think, however, that proper commercial arrangements can be made by which in spite of these handicaps cheap quinine may be made available in the rural areas and suitable arrangements may be made with the Dutch Kina Bureau as the Government of Italy has done.

The third handicap is due to the fact that the profits of the quinine industry are taken away by the general revenues of the Province. The profits amount to more than Rs. 6 lakhs a year but they are not permitted to be spent on the improvement of these departments or on the extension of the quinine plantations or on the spread and distribution of the knowledge of use of more and more quinine. There are other difficulties, namely, those which are due to the unbusinesslike arrangements for the sale and distribution of quinine and those which are due to the non-commercial administrative arrangements of these departments. So far as the distribution is concerned, the members of this House may be aware that formerly Government quinine was distributed through the Presidency Jail. But during recent years arrangements have been made with a very big European company with which is associated an Indian company as well for sale of quinine to the public for a period of 6 years. I must submit that there has been some slight improvement in the arrangements since then but the terms under which this agreement has been entered into are extremely unfair to Government and Government should see that these terms are forthwith revised. Without taking the least responsibility in regard to sale and distribution, these two private commercial firms are put into funds to the extent of Rs. 50,000 a year by way of net profit, without doing practically anything in regard to the proper distribution of and publicity for Government quinine.

The difficulties in regard to the non-commercial administrative arrangement may be cured if one officer, either the Superintendent of Cinchona Cultivation or anybody else, is left in charge of the entire organisation of cinchona business, including the plantation and manufacture, and he may also be entrusted with the work of propaganda, sale and distribution. His headquarters may be brought down for this purpose to Calcutta, which is after all the centre of all business and of distribution of knowledge, which will enable him to come in contact with the other Government departments with which this department has to be closely associated. The total quinine consumption in India appears to be near about 2 lakhs of pounds of quinine sulphate and 40 thousand pounds of mixed alkaloids, which will very much increase in no time. The total consumption of Bengal is so far about 50 thousand pounds of quinine per year. Eminent medical men including Dr. Bentley, have said that Bengal requires at

least one lakh of pounds of quinine a year in order to check malaria. I implore the Government to see that in no time this figure is reached. The quinine industry has very large prospects. It is one which is not a draining industry for the Government, it is an earning industry. If that is so, I cannot understand why Government is apathetic towards its development. The present profit of more than 6 lakhs can easily be doubled with a little attention and foresight. If Government are not prepared to act with that foresight, I suggest to them to set up a separate quasi-public Quinine Board which will conduct the business of the Cinchona Department on a commercial basis and will earn profit for Government, while ensuring efficient management in the light of the requirements of the province.

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** I have listened very carefully to the speech of Dr. Nalinksha Sanyal. So far as the Cinchona Department is concerned, everything possible has been done, and this department is one of the best concerns in the whole of India. The honourable member suggests that a separate arrangement may be made for the sale of quinine as also for its plantation and manufacture. May I ask, Sir, where will it be possible for me to have experienced men who have the knowledge of running this particular business? It has been already found that by this arrangement we have made this concern very successful, so far. It has been mentioned that we have not tried to give a proper supply of quinine to rural areas to cope with malaria. But in the report we have shown that in the existing factories we are manufacturing double the quantity. For increasing the supply of quinine, you will find that in this year's budget we have provided a sum of Rs. 28,000 for plantations. We have also provided money for purpose of supplying greater amenities to the factory of labourers——

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** No, you have done that for officers, not for labourers.

**The Hon'ble Mr. PRASANNA DEB RAIKUT:** It is for all concerned, including the labourers. We have been doing our best and it is no use criticising the Government in this way. So far as the price of quinine is concerned, it is not possible for us to dictate the price, because Java controls the market, and we have got to take terms from Java at the present moment. If we put our price low, it is quite possible that middlemen will buy from us and resell it at a higher price. The result will be that malaria-stricken people in rural areas will not get the supply at a cheap price. Therefore, it is not possible to reduce the present price of Rs. 18, which I think, is very very low.

I do not think I should say anything more now.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand under "43—Industries—Cinchona" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original demand of the Hon'ble Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut for the grant of Rs. 4,45,000 under "43—Industries—Cinchona" was then put and agreed to.

**"13—Other taxes and duties."**

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "13—Other taxes and duties".

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I beg to move that the demand under head "13—Other taxes and duties" of Rs. 30,000 be reduced by Rs. 100, to raise a discussion on the question of imposing a tax on the Calcutta Turf Club.

Sir, by this cut motion I do not intend to censure the Cabinet, but it is a motion intended for exploring further avenues of taxation. I would suggest to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister that if he will go through the rules and also the list of members of the Calcutta Turf Club, he will at once realise that a sum of Rs. 32,00,000 can be raised from this Club in the shape of amusement tax.

Sir, I do not want to dilate on the subject, from the beginning to the end. But I say, this club consists of 117 members to which unfortunately Indians——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid, you are not entitled in connection with this discussion to criticise the internal administration of the Club. What you can do is to suggest that the Club may be taxed.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I am going to do that. By this cut motion I wish to raise a discussion about the desirability of imposing a tax on the Turf Club, and in that connection in order to develop my argument, I must refer to the inner working of the Club.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I am afraid, you cannot do that. You can only justify the imposition of a tax.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Incidentally I have referred to the working of the Club, because there is a racial discrimination——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I want to know how that will be relevant to the point under discussion. The Calcutta Turf Club does not get any

grant from Government. So in the budget discussion you cannot criticise the inner working of the Club, but you can certainly say in a general way that that body should be taxed.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I will not enter into that subject again, but I will only say that it is a coterie.

Indian opinion, Sir, is against betting and it is useless to say that we disapprove these races in India, knowing full well that several thousand families have been ruined by going to the races in Calcutta. Sir, I would ask the Hon'ble the Finance Minister to consider that accepting the basis of my calculation, the gross annual income from betting on horses alone will roughly come up to Rs. 2,56,00,000. I fail to understand why this income should be immune from even the amusement tax which is charged on cinemas and on innocent games like football and cricket. By charging amusement tax alone at a rate of 2 annas per rupee, Government can derive a very handsome income of Rs. 32 lakhs per annum from this income on betting in the Royal Calcutta Turf Club. I may mention in this connection that the Government of Bombay have already taken initiative in this direction, and are deriving very good income as Tax from the Royal Western India Turf Club in Bombay. It is necessary here to point out that the Turf Club get only 12½ per cent. of the total money on betting, the other portions of the money being distributed to the winners of the races and owners of the horses, etc. At the same time the Turf Club have got other sources of income, such as at a rough estimate their annual income from the Book-Makers amount to two lakhs and twenty-four thousand rupees; they get about eight lakhs of rupees in a year as Entrance fees paid by members and the public for getting entrance in the race course; about four lakhs as entry fee of horses including forfeits, etc., about four lakhs as Stable rents and as fees for licenses issued to the Jockeys, Trainers, etc. Having regard to the fact that the Royal Calcutta Turf Club has been in existence since 1861 and this income is accumulating in the above scale the interest-income of the Club from Banking balance, Benevolent Fund and——

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PROSAD SINGH ROY:** May I know, Sir, what is the concrete suggestion of the hon'ble member? That point must be made clear, as I shall have to reply to the debate.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Do not reply if you do not find any suggestion.

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PROSAD SINGH ROY:** I shall accept your ruling, Sir.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** My suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister is that it is really surprising how this Turf Club has been so long saved from any imposition of any tax whatsoever. Sir, they have to pay only a small betting tax, say about 4 or 5 lakhs of rupees a year, and they have been saved from other taxes, because, Sir, we Indians are boycotted, and have got no access to the membership of the Turf Club. All that we can do, Sir, is to be the Stand member of the Club——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Hashemy, that has nothing to do with taxation.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** My point is this, Sir, that had we been entitled to be members of the Turf Club, it would have been possible for us to know the working and the annual gross income of the Turf Club. Sir, I will read out one simple rule of this Turf Club. "Regular Officers of His Majesty's Army, Navy and Royal Air Force——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Hashemy, I am perfectly willing to allow you to say everything which you want to so long as you can show that that has some connection with taxation. But any other matter certainly is foreign to the subject.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Sir, I am requesting the Cabinet to explore this avenue and in that connection I may tell you, Sir, that even Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin who is a Stand member——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. That does not arise.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** All right, Sir. I am only showing the assets of the Club. They should be taxed on the lines suggested by the Bombay Government. Sir, the Western India Club of Bombay has been taxed by the Bombay Government. Why this Cabinet should leave this Turf Club aside? Is it because that we are not allowed to enter there. Sir, even Sir Nazimuddin, the Mayor of Calcutta, even the Speaker of this House is not allowed to be a member of that Club. Even, Sir, His Excellency the Governor is at the mercy of this Club.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. I am again drawing you attention to the fact that you cannot drag in even the Speaker for the purpose of your taxation proposal.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** The Rule 19 is clear——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That does not matter.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** May I, Sir, draw your attention to Rule 19——

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have here the certified figures of the Turf Club accounts and taxation, and I think it would interest the House if I gave you as shortly as possible what these figures are; and these are facts. Where the hon'ble member who has just spoken got his information from it is very difficult to understand.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** I got it from an European member.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order.

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** The following taxes are paid by this Club. The totalisator tax is 4 per cent. of the gross takings; the admission tax, which is the entertainment or amusement tax to which the member referred, is 20 per cent. of the gross takings, and in addition there is a betting tax of 4 per cent. on the amount of winning bets, and members, whether they attend the races or not, will realize that winning bets also include losing bets. These taxes in the last financial year of the Club amounted to the following:—

| | Rs. |
|---|---|
| Totalisation tax ... ... ... | 6,61,683 |
| Admission tax ... ... ... | 1,65,928 |
| Betting tax ... ... ... | 1,74,429 |

The total paid to provincial revenues amounted to Rs. 10,02,040. But in addition to that Sir, the Club is mulcted in an income-tax which of course goes to the Central Government, but as we have learnt recently from the Finance Minister, some of it does come back to the province. In their last financial year then, the Club paid an income and super-tax of over a lakh of rupees with the result that it has paid to the revenues of the Province and of the Centre for one year a sum of over 11 lakhs of rupees. The actual amount it has paid to Bengal alone for the last 15 years amounts to more than two crores. I do not think in view of that one need go into all the figures in detail, but I can contradict every one of the statements that the hon'ble member has made and printed in the Yellow Paper.

Sir, he has referred to the Western India Turf Club: the Western India Turf Club pays at exactly the same rate as the Calcutta Turf Club. Nothing more and nothing less.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** It is a small club compared to the Club.

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** It is as big as this. The total deduction from the amount realised by the totalisators is 12½ per cent., and 4 per cent. of that as I have already pointed out goes to Government.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Is there any discrimination against Indians?

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** No, none whatsoever.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** How many Indian members are there?

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** The Speaker called the mover to order for raising such matters. Do not lead me astray.

Sir, I would like to give you the figures of the Club's profits. In this case I will give the average of five years. Before they have profits, their average annual donation to charity has been Rs. 1,33,140. Further, their contribution to up-country racing to help the breading of horses in the country is annually Rs. 66,227. This leaves a gross profit of Rs. 1,74,132. Again, I give the yearly average, but from that they pay the income and super tax to which I have already referred, and that averages over these five years per annum Rs. 73,125 leaving a net profit of just over one lakh of rupees. I think it ought to be clearly understood that that profit is not distributed to anyone, but merely goes into the reserves of the Club so that they can supply the public here with good racing and good entertainment.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** What is the salary of the Secretary?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order, order. That question does not arise.

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** It is more than the salary of the Ministers, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That does not matter.

**Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL:** Another point is that in actual racing the club loses very large sums. Their average losses over the last five years in Calcutta and Barrackpore are Rs. 2,70,000 per annum. They

have been able to stand these losses because of careful and conservative finance in the past, and by that they are able to give the public of Calcutta the racing that they do to-day.

Now, Sir, I think that Mr. Hashemy like myself is a seeker after truth. I have given him the facts, certified by auditors, and I hope in view of that he will believe me. Again, I am sure he is a very kind hearted man, and I hope that here too I may say 'like myself", and he would not like to deprive the public, even though he, like myself, never goes to the races, of the enjoyment they get.

With these words, Sir, I oppose the motion.

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Sir, being one who is not in the habit of frequenting the race course except on occasions when I am invited to enjoy the kind hospitality of the members of the Turf Club, I have not the same intimate knowledge of the affairs and the financial position of the Calcutta Turf Club as my hon'ble friend Sir George Campbell. So I do not think it necessary for me to go into detail after hearing the most elaborate and convincing figures that have been given by Sir George Campbell. One point I may mention, Sir; it is, that Government in imposing taxes, follow the salutary principle that "do not kill the goose that lays golden eggs", and here is a goose that lays golden eggs and Government do not propose to kill it. Sir, there is the tax on the totalisators and the betting tax. The betting tax brings us about a lakh and 75 thousand rupees. In the early years of these taxation measures, i.e., in 1922-23 the amount was much larger than that at present. It was something like 7½ lakhs speaks from memory. So it is a dwindling receipt now and any further taxation is likely to affect this revenue prejudicially, and instead of bringing more money to the Government it may bring a diminishing revenue. So Government do not think, that in the interest of revenue it is desirable nor do the Government think that it is fair in the interest of amusement, to impose further taxation on the Calcutta Turf Club.

The motion of Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy that the demand under the head "13—Other taxes and duties" was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy that a sum of Rs. 30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "13—Other taxes and duties" was then put and agreed to.

## Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned till 4-45 p.m. on Monday, the 28th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

## Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 28th March, 1938, at 4-45 p.m.

**Present:**

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur M. AZIZUL HAQUE, C.I.E.) in the Chair, eleven Hon'ble Ministers and 221 members.

**Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw your attention to the fact that though there is a rule that question papers should be laid on the table half an hour before the meeting commences and though we come here 15 or 20 minutes before time, we do not get sufficient light in the Chamber.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I hope you will get more light from to-morrow. I will see to it.

I hope the House will agree first to finish the questions which are fixed for to-day within 15 minutes.

## STARRED QUESTIONS

**(to which oral answers were given)**

**Withdrawal of ban from Bakarganj district.**

***312. Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Special) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Bakarganj district is under the ban of an Emergency Area since 1935?

(*b*) Is it a fact—

(*i*) that Rev. Bhikshu Ottama, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, was prohibited from addressing any meeting at Barisal in 1935;

(*ii*) that the Krisak Conference under the presidency of Maulvi Asrafuddin Chaudhury was banned in 1936; and

(*iii*) that the Youth Conference was banned in 1937?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of withdrawing the ban from Bakarganj district?

**MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin):** (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes, under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code.

(*ii*) Yes, under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code.

(*iii*) Yes, if the Bakarganj District Students' Conference is referred to. This was also banned under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code.

(*c*) No.

**Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** What is the reason for continuing the ban under the Act of 1935 even now?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** As a matter of precaution, Sir.

**Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** Is it not a fact that for nearly 4 or 5 years there has been no case of a criminal nature in the Barisal district, justifying the continuance of this ban?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Even the replies will show that the Act has not been used in any of the cases cited.

**Interference of police officer with a procession at Naria, Faridpur.**

***313. Dr. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Government issued instructions to the Police of the district of Faridpur not to allow the villagers of the district to hold any procession carrying national flags in their hands on the 26th January last?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that one Waheb Mian, an Intelligence Branch Police Officer of Naria police-station in the said district, snatched away the national flags from the hands of the processionists of the village of Naria on the said date?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, what action is proposed to be taken in the matter?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) No.

(*b*) On the 26th January, while Assistant Sub-Inspector Abdul Waheb was watching a procession from the verandah of his house, the processionists came close to the house and began to shout slogans and one of them carrying a Congress flag entered the verandah. The

Assistant Sub-Inspector being annoyed at the trespass took the flag from his hand and ordered him to leave the verandah. This he did and the processionists left the spot.

(*c*) None.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government have taken to ascertain if this report given by the officers concerned is correct?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The Superintendent of Police enquired into it and sent the report.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if, as in the case of the previous question with regard to the Dacca meeting, there was indiscretion on the part of the police officers concerned in this case also?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of holding an enquiry into the facts of the case?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** No.

**Removal of ban on the "Birendra Mandir" at Chhayagaon in Faridpur.**

***314. Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware—

(*i*) that there was an institution under the name of "Birendra Mandir" at Chhayagaon in the district of Faridpur which had a tin-shed with a library of books and implements of physical exercise; and

(*ii*) that the said institution was banned, the tin-shed demolished and the books and implements of exercise were carried away by the police?

(*b*) Under what authority did the police act in the aforesaid manner?

(*c*) Is it the present policy of the Government to ban an institution like the said "Birendra Mandir"?

(*d*) If so, what are the prescribed rules under which such an institution may grow in this Province?

(*e*) If not, has the Hon'ble Minister considered the desirability of removing the ban on the said "Birendra Mandir" and restoring its properties?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) and (*b*) The institution was banned under Government Notification No. 8288P., dated the 3rd March, 1932. Some objectionable books and other articles were seized by the police under a search warrant.

(*c*) to (*e*) The attention of the hon'ble member is drawn to the Press Note, dated the 3rd March, 1938. It has not yet been found possible to remove the ban on the "Birendra Mandir", but the matter is under consideration.

*Press Note referred to in the reply to clauses (c) to (e) of starred question No. 314.*

CALCUTTA, THE 3RD MARCH, 1938.

The Provincial Government have had under review the list of associations declared illegal under the provisions of section 16 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, and have directed the cancellation of the ban in 176 cases. These include all the associations numbering 110 in the district of Midnapore. The cases of the remaining associations 42 in number are under examination.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** What is the basis of the information that not all the books but some objectionable books were seized?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** That is the information available to us.

**Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether within a very short time the ban on the Birendra Mandir is likely to be removed?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That question has been answered.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

**(answers to which were laid on the table)**

**Detenu Sj. Haripada Das Mazumdar.**

**89. Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that detenu Sj. Haripada Das Mazumdar of Bharukathi, district Bakarganj, has been conditionally released after long detention;

(*ii*) that even during his home internment he had been recipient of a monthly allowance of Rs. 15 but this has since been discontinued; and

(*iii*) that he has to report himself twice a month before the thana officer and to inform of his intention of leaving the station on 24 hours' notice?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that he is the only member in his family who is capable of making any earning;

(*ii*) that owing to discontinuance of his allowance and on account of existing restriction he cannot move freely in search of any employment; and

(*iii*) that his repeated prayers for allowance have not been favourably considered?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of—

(*i*) granting him an allowance conformably to their declaration order for the renewal of his allowance; and

(*ii*) removing the restrictions still existing on him?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** (*a*) (*i*) No. He is unconditionally released.

(*ii*) No. Continuance of the allowance for six months was sanctioned in January last.

(*iii*), (*b*) and (*c*) Do not arise.

**90. Babu RADHANATH DAS:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Special) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact—

(*i*) that detenu Sj. Haripada Das Mazumdar of Bharukathi, district Bakarganj, was conditionally released a few months back; and

(*ii*) that even during his home internment he was the recipient of a monthly allowance of Rs. 15 but that has since been discontinued?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that he has to report himself twice a month before the thana officer and to inform of his intention of leaving the station 24 hours earlier?

(*c*) Is it not a fact that he is the only man in his family who is capable of making any earning?

(*d*) Is it not a fact that on account of restrictions still in force he cannot move about freely and seek for an employment?

(*e*) Is it not a fact that his repeated petitions for allowance have been refused?

(*f*) Are the Government considering the desirability of granting him an allowance conformably to their declaration order and of removing restrictions still existing on him?

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** The hon'ble member is referred to the answer given to the previous unstarred question put by Mr. Narendra Nath Das Gupta, M.L.A.

**Regarding questions pending from 26th March, 1938.**

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I propose that these questions be taken up after 6-30 p.m. because by 6-30 p.m. we will have to finish the budget discussions.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** May I suggest, Sir, that these questions be taken up to-morrow?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I have no objection to taking up the questions either to-day at 6-30 p.m. or to-morrow.

**A question of privilege.**

**Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I be permitted to draw your attention and through you the attention of the members of the House and of the Cabinet to the fact that life and property, and honour and dignity, particularly the privilege of the members of this House, are at stake. Hooligans raided the houses of certain members of this House, shouting in an insulting and undignified manner and treatening some of them. I do not know who sent them. May I know, Sir, was it at the instance of the Government? Although those people who shouted did not mention the names of the Home and the Finance Ministers as well as of other Ministers, they shouted in the name of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and threatened us in a manner that we are afraid to live in Calcutta. If our life and property, more particularly the fundamental right and privilege of exercising our freedom in voting in this House are at stake it is no use coming here. I seek the protection of Government and I want to know definitely from the Government whether it had been done at their instance.

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** Sir, will you allow an adjournment motion to be moved to-morrow on this subject, waiving at the same time the objection to its being raised to-morrow?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** If you table an adjournment motion, certainly I will consider the matter, but I cannot give a ruling off-hand on a theoretical proposition.

**Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I draw your attention to the fact that we, on this side of the House, have also an adjournment motion——

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It does not matter whether this side or the other has got to sponsor or welcome an adjournment motion. If notice of an adjournment motion is given, I will certainly consider it on its merits.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** Government are not aware of anything of what the honourable member has said, and we do not know what he is referring to.

**Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA:** Sir, apart from the question of an adjournment motion, you will be pleased to find from pages 87 and 88 of May's Parliamentary Practice that matters like this have been treated as a matter of privilege and any member who has either been insulted or annoyed or threatened for his conduct within the House is

entitled to bring the matter up. This House has not the power to commit or condemn or imprison persons but certainly this legislature possesses the power of disapproving such conduct, and that is very clearly laid down. So, apart from the question of an adjournment motion, this question having been raised, it is a serious matter of privilege, and I hope, Sir, you, as protector of the privilege of the members of the House, will give a ruling approving of this.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I will consider this matter to-morrow. In the meantime, if it is proposed to move any motion, adjournment or otherwise, I will consider on its merits, if notice is given to me.

So far as the budget is concerned, I propose that it will be rather convenient if the Miscellaneous Departments and Ports and Pilotage, and Stationery and Printing are moved one after another, and then the debate takes place so that all labour matters might be taken up—matters affecting labour employed by Government or other bodies and persons.

## DEMAND FOR GRANT.

### "47—Miscellaneous Departments."

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,16,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "47—Miscellaneous Departments."

### "30—Ports and Pilotage."

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage".

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Sarker, will you kindly move the "Stationery and Printing"?

### "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses."

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 22,13,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses".

**Mr. P. BANERJI:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 22,13,000 under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the policy regarding the Provident Fund of the labourers in this department.

Sir, it was brought to the notice of the Government year after year that of all departments, the menials and labourers in this department are ill-paid and ill-treated. Government in many cases in previous years said that it was not so, and at the same time assured us that the matter will be looked into. But so far, the matter stands where it was, and I should say instead of any improvement, it has changed for the worse. Sir, in this department there is no security of service for the labourers. In most cases they have been employed in the department for 10, 15 or 20 years and even after serving so many years in the department, they are not made permanent, and as I have pointed out, there is no security of service whatsoever. On the slightest pretext they are dismissed. No provident fund has been started in their case. Government insists on provident fund for the protection of the poor labourers in almost all the departments, even in case of non-official agencies, but we fail to understand why matters should not be set right in Government's own home. If this provident fund is started, then in a way security of service is established, for in that case dismissal without notice and summarily becomes impossible. Because in all such cases they can apply to the Government at least for the refund of their money either the Government contribution or their own contribution, and thus they stand a chance of appealing to the Government. Here the Government knows nothing about these small things, but they always support their official, that is to say the man on the spot, and it is a misfortune of this Government that rightly or wrongly they have always a tendency to support the man on the spot without investigating the real state of affairs. I would, therefore, suggest to the Government that if they really mean business, and as they now say that they stand for the labourers and poor people, let them not say this in so many words, but let them prove it by their action that they really want to do good to the people, and this will be considered a step in the right direction.

With these words, Sir, I move my motion.

**Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 22,13,000 under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion on the condition of press workers in the Government Presses.

Sir, in moving the motion that stands in my name, I beg to inform the members of the House that a discussion is just now going on between the representatives of the Press Employees' Association on one side and Mr. N. M. Khan, Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal on the other, for the purpose of finding out ways and means for the improvement of the lot of press workers of the Government of Bengal Press and specially for the abolition of piece rate system that obtains there. Therefore, I think it would not be very proper to dilate on this subject, because the Government itself has realised that this piece rate system is not working properly and that has to be changed. But I would like to just emphasize on one aspect of this question.

There is one union called the Press Employees' Union, a union of long standing. It was organized by late Deshbandhu Das of hallowed memory in 1919, and it has been doing yeoman's service to the press workers of Bengal for so many years. But it is very strange that this Association, though it has approached the Government repeatedly for recognition, that recognition has been denied to it; but it is stranger still that during the incumbency of Mr. Battersby, the Superintendent of Bengal Government Press, when this Association was trying for recognition, this Mr. Battersby took it into his head to crush this union, because he found that this union was always bringing grievance after grievance to the notice of the Government. So he started a bogus union with the help of one Mr. Manmohan Ghosh, and recognized this union though 700 employees of the Government Press applied to Government not to recognize that union which which was to all intents and purposes a bogus thing absolutely. Whatever justification there was when Mr. Battersby was there, after he left this union which was a bogus thing is now absolutely dead. But in spite of that Government is still continuing to recognize that body which is dead and not the one which is living and very much kicking too.

I may mention here also that the Press Employees' Association has been trying to obtain recognition, and 90 per cent. of the employees of the Government Press are regularly-paid subscribers of this Association and still this is not given the recognition that is their due. I hope that under the present circumstances, Government will alter its attitude and give the recognition that is due to this union. I earnestly pray that honourable members of this House will also support me in my appeal for the recognition of the Press Employees' Association, by the Government of Bengal. All members here know that I represent labour in this House but I think very few know that I was qualified to stand as a candidate, because I was an official of the All-Bengal Press Workers' Union, and few still, perhaps know that all my claim to represent labour by having worked as a labourer was in a press, and that also in the Government Press, Alipore, and that was when I was a

prisoner there. So I have got a treble right to speak on behalf of the workers of Alipore Government Press and as such, I appeal to this House that please do something for the press workers who are directly under the Government! With these words, I move my cut motion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** "30—Ports and Pilotage." Maulvi Mohammed Mozammel Haq, do you move your motion (316)?

**Maulvi MOHAMMED MOZAMMEL HUQ:** The member spoke in Bengali of which the following is an English translation:—

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw your attention to a matter which I am eager to know. You asked me if I was going to move the cut-motion No. 316 and my reply was that I would not move it, but as the matter is important, would like to have some discussion about it. You assured me that discussion would be allowed later on. You have, however, closed the subject without asking me. The Speaker's words should certainly carry some weight. Should the words of the Speaker of such a big legislature of Bengal, have no value, where shall we go? Because the matter was important, I had wanted to discuss it, but that could no more be.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The next motion (317) is by Mr. Syed Abdul Majid. Do you move it?

**Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I hope you will be very short. You know well the very short time at our disposal for discussion.

**Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100.

The object of this cut motion is to draw the attention of Government to the difficulties and hardships caused to the people of Sandwip, Hatiya and Ramgati in the matter of communication with the headquarters station of Noakhali for want of steamer service. Sir, these three islands, as you know, are very important in the district of Noakhali for more than one reason. They have got a population of more than 3 lakhs and they contribute about 7½ lakhs of rupees as Khas Mahal revenue to the Government, but there is no steamer service between the main land of Noakhali and these three islands, and consequently there has been much inconvenience, for journey between these islands and Noakhali. Now, Sir, formerly the River Steam Navigation Company used to ply steamer service between these islands and the

headquarters station of Noakhali, but since 1919 this steamer service was stopped and then, Sir, the District Board of Noakhali took up the task of maintaining ferry boat service, and country boats used to ply between the islands and the headquarters station; but, Sir, every year during the monsoon, some country boats sank and there were several such disasters every year causing loss of many human lives. During the year 1933, there was a very big boat disaster which caused loss of lives to the extent of about 200 people. So there was a huge agitation for a steamer service and at the instance of some leading men of Sandwip one Marwari Company started a steamer service between the islands and Noakhali, but for want of sufficient income and other facilities, this steamer service also was withdrawn in the winter of the same year. Steamer service having been much appreciated, but there was a hue and cry by the people when the service had been withdrawn. Thereupon, the District Board at the request of the then District Magistrate, Mr. Whittaker, offered a subsidy of Rs. 500 a month and promised to give other facilities to any company who could establish a steamer service between Noakhali and the islands. The Hooghly Steamer Company accepted the offer on certain terms and established a steamer service between the islands and the Noakhali station successfully and it carried on the service very successfully for the last two years. With the reconstitution of the new District Board, however, troubles began. The subsidy was not regularly paid and further no steps were taken by the Board to stop the plying of the unlicensed country boats, in spite of frequent complaints. The company thus lost much money and their income fell down considerably. They then gave notice to the District Board that they would withdraw the service from the 1st of April, 1937, unless the subsidy was increased and adequate measures were also taken by the District Board for stopping the plying of the unlicensed country boats on the steamer route. The District Board did not, however, take any step nor did they meet their legitimate grievances. The steamer service was accordingly stopped by the company from the 1st of April last. Owing to the discontinuance of the service the people of the islands have been put to much inconvenience and again they have been compelled to travel by country boats at the risk of their lives. During this short period there were two or three boat disasters after the discontinuance of the service and the report of those boat disasters which was responsible for the loss of many human lives were published in the various newspapers in the "Statesman" of 23rd May 1937, and in the local papers "Krishak Bani" and also in the "Azad" and, then, Sir, from that time onward there has been serious demand for the steamer service but nothing has been done. And, then, there were the representations made to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Communication, and, Sir, the Secretary of that Department Mr. S. K. Haldar, wrote a letter to me saying that the matter had been under consideration of the Government and due steps will be taken for the establishment of the

steamer service as early as possible; but, Sir, nothing has been done to establish steamer service or to take any step for compelling the District Board to establish again the steamer service. Now, Sir, as already stated it happens that in every year in the rainy season, two or three boats capsize and owing to the boat disasters many people lose their lives. Of course, there has been heavy traffic between the islands and the main land because not only the people of the islands go to the headquarters station at Noakhali, but the people of the main land have got extensive cultivation in the various *chars* of these islands and they cannot go safe to those places for want of a steamer service and it happens sometimes, Sir, that there is complete stoppage of even the service of country boats on account of storm for days together when the islands are completely cut off from the main land so far as the communication is concerned. So, Sir, the people of these islands who pay a substantial amount to the provincial revenue from the Khas Mahal, as well as the zemindaries, expect that the Government should come forward for the establishment of a steamer service. With these words, Sir, I commend this cut motion for the consideration of the House.

**Maulana MD. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI:** I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100 to discuss the paucity of Muslim employees.

মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, ৩২৭নং motion যাহা আমার নামে আছে, এই motion এর উদ্দেশ্য Ports বিভাগ সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করা এবং তৎপ্রতি Minister-in-incharge এর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করা। Port বিভাগের কর্ম্মচারীদের প্রতি লক্ষ্য করিলে দেখা যায়—উচ্চ কর্ম্মচারী যাহারা—যথা Examiner, Surveyor, Harbour Master—এই সকল উচ্চ পদে কোন Indian আছে কি না জানি না। তারপরে office এর কর্ম্মচারী যাহারা, clerk যাহারা, তাহাদের প্রতি লক্ষ্য করিলে দেখা যায় যে, মুসলমানের সংখ্যা এই সকল অফিসে এত নগণ্য যে তাহা উল্লেখ করার উপযুক্ত নয়। এই বিভাগে যাহাতে উপযুক্ত সংখ্যক মুসলমান কর্ম্মচারী নিযুক্ত হয় সে দিকে Minister-in-charge এর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করা হইল আমার প্রস্তাবের উদ্দেশ্য। আশা করি তিনি এই বিভাগে মুসলমান কর্ম্মচারী নিযুক্ত করার বিষয় বিশেষভাবে বিবেচনা করিবেন।

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 4,72,000 required for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100 for raising a discussion on the paucity of Indian officers in the department.

Sir, it is an irony of fate that such a question has at all to be raised in this Assembly. Some years before, a similar question was raised before a Royal Commission, when the late Mr. K. C. Roy of the Associated Press of India in reply to a question said that the question and answer should be in the opposite directions and that in India with an Indian Government the question should not be as to

what should be the percentage of Indian officers, but the question should be whether all the officers should not be Indian. The Department of Ports and Pilotage, Sir, is a department which is manned practically exclusively by non-Indians. The Civil List will show that out of 12 superior grade officers, viz., Port Officers, Surveyors, Engineers, etc., there is only one Indian officer, and his name is Engineer Lieutenant D. N. Mukherji, R.I.N.—the rest being non-Indians. This is a state of things which is extremely regrettable. Because Engineer Lieutenant Mukherji is there, it cannot be said that Indians have no aptitude for maritime training. He has been there for some time, and he is serving there with credit. Now looking into the list of Branch Pilots, Master Pilots, and Mate Pilots, it would appear that out of 39 officers—Branch Pilots, Master Pilots and others—there is not a single Indian. The Civil List will also show that out of these 39 officers as many as 32 have been appointed in England and only 7 have been appointed locally. Of course, there are some Indians in the inferior grades, but their number is very few, and they have been appointed only recently. Out of 10 Leadsmen apprentices—First Mate, Second Mate and Apprentices—there is only a single Bengali, viz., Mr. K. N. Lahiri. The other nine are all non-Bengalis. It is also strange, Sir, that Government up till now have taken absolutely no steps to train Bengalis—whether Muslims or Hindus—to qualify themselves for admission into the Marine Department of the Government of Bengal.

The aptitude and competence, Sir, of East Bengal Muslims for maritime jobs are very well-known. In all inland vessels and in many sea-going vessels they have all along filled the posts of serangs and sukhanis with credit to themselves, and, as a matter of fact, there is not a single vessel in Bengal which has not a Muslim serang.

Our Chief Minister, Sir, is a Muslim, and the Hon'ble Minister in charge of this department is also a Muslim. It is regrettable to find, Sir, that they have not taken any steps whatever to foster a spirit of learning the maritime craft amongst their Muhammadan brethren.

My esteemed friend Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islambadi has moved a motion drawing the attention of Government to the paucity of Muslim employees in this department. I regret to observe, Sir, that he did not mention the claims of other communities excepting the Muslims——

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Sen, are you going to move the next motion also?

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Yes, Sir, I shall formally move it.

Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,72,000 required for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 70,000 (unnecessary acquisition of outstanding interests of Narayanganj Dockyard).

**Mr. SPEAKER:** All the motions under Miscellaneous Departments, Stationery and Printing, and Ports and Pilotage have been finished. Is there anyone who wants to speak on the Miscellaneous Departments?

(At this stage Mr. J. N. Gupta rose to speak.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Gupta, it will be convenient if you finish in one speech whatever you have got to say about all these three matters, viz., Miscellaneous Departments, Stationery and Printing, and Ports and Pilotage.

**Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** Yes, Sir, I will do so.

Sir, I rise to speak on this occasion to make a few observations. In doing so, I must say at the outset that the impression that was created on the appointment of the Minister for Labour, who happened to be a Trade Union leader, has since been removed, and dissatisfaction has been brewing amongst the workers. The contributions made by the Hon'ble Minister for Labour during one year that he has been in office towards the amelioration of the condition of the workers, are so meagre that no one considers that anything tangible will come out of the hands of the present Minister. While he was a Trade Union leader, he professed many things and on every occasion he assured the workers that he would always try to espouse the cause of the labourers.

Turning to the picture presented by the budget in this session, it grieves one to find how miserably he has failed to protect the interests of the workers and how blindly he has given his consent to a budget which has allotted only Rs. 20,000 to his department—totally insufficient for the development of such an important department. Sir, when he assumed charge as Minister of Labour, we expected many things from him inasmuch as he was a Trade Union leader and was in touch with labour, but from his activities during the last year I am inclined to believe that he is more anxious now to please the people of the constituency who returned him to this Assembly than to attend to the need of the workers. I admit that it is his primary duty to do so but, at the same time, he should bear in mind that he has got another important function for which he has been given the portfolio of Labour. Instead of moving as a tail-board to the Chief Minister, he should have made it a point to come more in contact with the labour in this province,

so that he could be well posted as to the real condition of the workers. I, request him to engage himself more in the cause of labour which will help him to establish confidence of the workers and his Ministry will gain popularity in no time.

Let him give up the idea of serving as a tail-board to the Chief Minister. The success of his Ministry depends upon the amount of work he can put forward for labour.

Next I want to deal with the problem of determining the minimum wages of the workers. Unless any measure is taken by the Hon'ble Minister to establish a machinery to examine the question, there cannot be any peace amongst the workers. There is a provision in the Treaty of Versailles that unless there is peace in the house of workers, there cannot be peace in the world. Regarding the question of fixing of minimum living wages, I want to place before the House certain facts which will convince the House that the wages that are now being paid to the workers are quite inadequate and are far below the living wage. The Royal Commission on Labour that visited India, recommended that a machinery should be fixed to determine the living wages, but Government appears to have done nothing as yet.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. SYED AHMED KHAN :**

মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, আমি আমার বন্ধু সৈয়দ আব্দুল মজিদ সাহেবের motion সমর্থন কোরছি। নোয়াখালি District এর হাতিয়া, সন্দীপ, রামগতি, বুড়ির চর, প্রভৃতি দ্বীপ-সমূহ, লক্ষ্মীপুর, ভবানীগঞ্জ, ফরাসগঞ্জ প্রভৃতি অঞ্চলের যে সমস্ত লোক যাতায়াত করে, প্রায় প্রত্যেক বৎসরই নৌকাডুবির ফলে সে অঞ্চলের সেই সব লোকেদের মধ্যে প্রায় ২।৩ শত লোক মারা যায়। বর্ষার যখন মেঘনায় উত্তাল তরঙ্গ বৃদ্ধিপ্রাপ্ত হয় সে সময় নৌকায় যাতায়াত করা বড় সহজ কথা নয়। সেই সময় নৌকাডুবির ফলে বহু লোক মারা যায়। হাতিয়া, সন্দীপ, রামগতি, প্রভৃতি খাস মহলে যাদের জমি আছে, সে রকম লোকের সংখ্যা নেহাৎ কম নয়, সেই সব লোকে চর অঞ্চলে হামেসা না যেয়ে পারে না। সেখানে যাতায়াতের সুবিধা কোরে দেওয়ার দিকে District Board মোটেই মনোযোগ দেন না। গভর্ণমেণ্ট থেকে চেষ্টা কোরে যদি সেখানে একখানা ষ্টীমার যাতায়াতের বন্দোবস্ত কোরে না দেওয়া হয় তাহলে সেখানকার সেই দুর্দ্দশাগ্রস্ত লোকদের দুঃখের শেষ হবে না। খাস মহাল থেকে গভর্ণমেণ্টের বহু income হ'য়ে থাকে, গভর্ণমেণ্ট সেখানকার লোকদের কাছ থেকে বহু অত্যাচার অবিচার কোরে কড়াক্রান্তি পর্য্যন্ত খাজনা আদায় কোরে নিয়ে আসেন; এমন কি সার্টিফিকেট কোরেও খাজনা আদায় কোরতে ছাড়েন না, কিন্তু প্রজারা যাতে বাঁচতে পারে, সে দিকে গভর্ণমেণ্টের কিছুই লক্ষ্য নাই। এ অবস্থায় প্রজারা জীবন মৃত্যুর জন্য অহরহ প্রতীক্ষা কোরছে। আশ্চর্য্যের বিষয় এই যে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আপন প্রজাদের মৃত্যুর হাত থেকে রক্ষা করবার জন্য কোন চেষ্টাই কোরছেন না। সেই জন্য আমি সৈয়দ আব্দুল জমিদ সাহেবের motion সমর্থন কোরছি। এবং সভ্য মহোদয়গণের নিকট দাবী জানাচ্ছি আপনারা যেন নিরীহ প্রজাদের জীবন রক্ষার জন্য এই ষ্টীমার রাখার প্রস্তাবের পক্ষে ভোটদান করেন।

**Mr. AFTAB ALI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to protest against the labour policy of the Ministry, particularly in connection with the recognition of trade unions. During the last budget we heard a lot about recognition and of rules being made but up till now no recognition in its real term and sense is being accorded to any trade union worth the name, unless that trade union is started by black-legs or by hired strike-breakers and supported by the Labour Minister. Sir, I can cite at least one instance in the case of the Press Employees' Association. I may say that almost all the workers employed in the Bengal Government Press belong to the said association, but when the said association applied for recognition complying with all the rules of Government regarding recognition, the rival union that came up with absolutely no membership or at any rate whose membership can be counted in one hand, was accorded recognition. May I ask, Sir, is this the way by which Government want to accord recognition to trade unions? Such recognition means submission to the Government or to the employers. I may point out very clearly that if Government or the employers want submission in the name of so-called recognition, labour—at least the organised section of labour—will not come forward for such recognition and I believe they can do without it for a few more years yet. They cannot and will not accept recognition which will mean submission. Recognition, in the trade union sense and term, means the conclusion of a collective agreement, and it also means establishment of a joint machinery in which the employers and the employed shall be equally represented on equal terms and in that sense labour—at least the organised section of the labour or the section in whose name I am entitled to speak here,—will welcome recognition. I know that with this poor representation in this Assembly, labour may go unheard to-day, especially when labour has lost 5 to my right and 1 to my left. And I am afraid that we may not get recognition from the present Government in proportion to our strength outside, but I make myself bold to give this timely warning that further neglect of labour—further neglect to accord recognition to trade unions will mean trouble.

Sir, we of the trade union movement, do not easily go for strike. At least the Seamen's Unions, which I represent in this House, do not go on strike every now and then. But I can inform this House that the seamen of this Province went on strike in 1918 and obtained an increase of Rs. 30 lakhs a year. They again had to use their trade union strength in 1929 when the employers and the Government combined, refused to dismiss the then licensed shipping brokers who was extorting the seamen. And the seamen failing in all constitutional efforts, applied their trade union strength and got the same broker dismissed within a fortnight. We are again trying to get our grievances redressed both for the foreign-going seamen and the inland seamen and we are now trying all constitutional means, but it seems that the Clive Street is determined not to hear us and perhaps they

are again anxious to see our strength and I am sure they will have an occasion to see this in the near future. As to the policy of Government, as I said at the general discussion on the budget, my union took the first opportunity of inviting the members of the Cabinet and acquainted them with the labour points of view. My union took special care and invited the attention of the members of the Cabinet that if they also joined the capitalists in raising the bogey of communism and thereby tried to suppress the trade-union movement, the result would be that the bogey would become a real one and they would have its full consequences.

I am not using these things as a threat, but I am anxious that the industrial unrest and conflicts should be enquired into and causes found and remedied. It is no good talking of industrial peace while you do not care to handle the fundamental differences between the haves and havenots. It is no good talking of peace—it is no good talking of industrial co-operation between the employers and the employees until and unless the main causes of such differences are properly tackled and removed. The Royal Commission on Labour recommended the appointment of a Provincial Industrial Council but up till now Government have not tried or even thought fit to find out such means by which the industrial unrest could be checked and causes be removed.

Another point what I want to bring to the notice of this House is the subject of compensation to the workers. We have a Workmen's Compensation Court for the whole province situated at Writers' Buildings. It is my personal knowledge (I am not relying on any information) that when a worker institutes a case in the Compensation Court he cannot secure any compensation before six months on the average at times he has to wait even longer. I can mention the case of seamen in particular. When a seaman applies for compensation he is told that the Home Office has been addressed. That takes a month or two. Then he has to undergo medical examination and such other things which make him wait for at least 6 months before he can expect to get anything. I know of cases where workers were forced to leave their compensation claims and go away, because waiting here became more costly than the amount claimed for. I would seriously draw the attention of Government to this matter and here they have no fear of growth of trade unionism or of any other movement which they do not consider to their interest or to their advantage. After all, compensation is not a much grudged concession to workers from a labour point of view. It is a little concession willingly made to the workers but even this little and insufficient concession is not being properly worked out. Unfortunately, I cannot give figures of these cases at the moment, but I am sure that if an enquiry is undertaken by the Minister concerned, he will find that my complaint is not unjustified. With these few words, I propose to take my seat but before I do so, I would like to make another

suggestion. Last year while speaking on this subject I drew the attention of the Ministry to the so-called seamen's Home.

(Here the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** I do not rise to protest against anything but I do want to lodge a complaint against the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition for the time-table they have agreed to. It is impossible to place one's ideas before the House on any subject within the time that an ordinary member in this House usually gets. We fear the bell, and the clock takes away all ideas out of our mind. Under fear and nervousness even the one or two points that we wish to place before the House seem to disappear. Next year, I hope they will arrange a time-table that will be kinder to even the worm, the ordinary member. The Leaders will have to arrange longer sittings. We must be given time to express our views and put our ideas before the House.

Coming to the subject of the motion which I am placing before the House, let me first begin by saying that the Government of India has been described in the past as a *mai-bap* Government,—a Government that was supposed to take the keenest possible interest in the welfare of the teeming millions of India and was keeping careful watch over every aspect of India's progress. Experience has shown that the *mai* part of Government has been rather step-motherly. The Government should remove the impression that it is acting as the agent of non-Indian interests. Our industries and all those items which go to make a nation have been neglected. It must, however, be admitted that although not on socialistic principles, the railways, the canals and the highways are State properties which may safely be considered as nationalised. But I was led to press this cut motion before the House because the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Department had upset me by the attitude adopted by him, as spokesman of the Government, an attitude of "no-policy" regarding the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. It seems as if they have not yet given thought to the problem and, therefore, if we do not wake them up, if we do not tell them that the people of Bengal want them to initiate a bold policy now for the benefit and in the interests of the people, danger lies ahead. The name 'Public Utility' is a convenient American phrase to designate a class of industries, such as, Water and Gas Supply, Railway, Tramways and Transport Services, Telephones, Post and Telegraphs, Electric Supply and so on. The operations of these services affect large numbers of the citizens and, consequently, it is now admitted and recognized on all hands that they must come under public ownership, they must be municipalized and nationalized. These being utilities for the largest number of the people have a tendency to become centralized and monopolistic and, as such, unless controlled, the corporations, that have

charge of them, are likely to run away with the profits and go on increasing their charges, day to day, from the public. I do hope, the Hon'ble Minister will initiate some policy. He may follow the old system of the Government where they guaranteed a percentage of profit. In that system a minimum used to be guaranteed; but if that is not possible to-day, what I would suggest is that a maximum percentage of say, 1 or 2 per cent. above bank rate be guaranteed to these corporations and the balance of the profits, thrown back into the utilities with a view to improve and cheapen them or in the alternative to become part of the revenues of the Province. Unless this is done, it will be impossible for us to reorganise and reconstruct our whole economic structure. Public utilities in Bengal, for the time being, until we have advanced a bit further, would be, to my mind, electricity, not only in Calcutta, but in the different towns of the Province and also, if we have evolved any scheme of rural electricity, all over Bengal——

**Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI:** Not yet developed.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI:** Tramways are a public utility that is crying to have public ownership. The same is the case with Telephones, and gas-works and other utilities that, from time to time, the wisdom of the Cabinet or the wider wisdom of this House may decide to be a public utility. India has tried to go a bit further than it has done in the past since the new Governments came into power in the matter of Co-operative Credit and Co-operative Banking. If we do the same in the matter of Public Utilities, I do not think we shall be making any revolutionary change in the policy of the Government, and therefore, Sir, I repeat that the Government should come forward with a definite policy. They have had ample time to think over these things—almost a year; and if we are assured that some such thing is going to be evolved out of the collective or individual brains of the members of the Cabinet, we will be prepared to give them one year more. But beyond that, Sir, it will be disastrous to let them go on with a policy of drift, and allow the corporations controlling the Public Utilities to-day to run away with huge profits—profits that ought to go to the nation. Let us first decide upon a policy. It will not be difficult to decide later on whether the services should be controlled by the Government direct or through other agencies such as Municipalities, District or Local Boards or even commercial corporations. I assure my Hon'ble friend the Minister that once he decides to bring them under public ownership, the public will give him all the money he will need should the coffers and credit of the Government fail him.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Sir, I shall deal with the speech which has been last delivered because it is the freshest in

my mind. The hon'ble member spoke words which I can fairly state were taken out of my very mouth. When he asked me to nationalise electricity, I think he remembered that not so very long ago, at the time when the question of sanction to the Calcutta Corporation to acquire the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation was discussed, I definitely stated that the policy of Government in respect of electricity in general and of this electricity institution in particular, was greater and greater public control, leading ultimately to nationalisation. I have also had the benefit of a discussion with the hon'ble member and in that discussion I pointed out to him that we do propose taking certain very immediate steps in this connection on the approved lines of getting such bodies under public control. There are various methods of doing this. The easiest method and not the safest method is to purchase this institution outright by raising a large loan. There are other methods of providing for sinking funds, and, as the hon'ble member himself has suggested guaranteeing for a certain period but he must remember that in cases of this nature if you guarantee profits which are lower than the profits which that company is getting, it becomes incumbent upon Government to pay compensation to the other side. Now, in a matter of this nature, namely, nationalisation of an electricity concern and the introduction of electricity in the rural areas as well as in the towns it means an enormous expenditure, and, I visualise, an expenditure of something like Rs. 25 to 30 crores. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Much less than that). Sir, my friend says that it could be done at a much less cost than that. Well, Sir, my friend might do it, but I visualise that sum, and my estimate for the time being must stand. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: What about Madras and U. P.? Have not they electrified the countryside?) No, they have not been able to introduce electricity in the whole of the countryside, but only in places. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Not only in places but in large areas). Yes, it may be in large areas, but surely not in the whole of the Presidencies. You must also remember that so far as the Madras Presidency is concerned it has got more water power and electrical possibilities than the level plains of Bengal. But in any event, whether the cost will be Rs. 25 crores or Rs. 30 or a little less than that, I do not think that the House will be satisfied if I were to initiate a scheme which will cost the revenues of the province such a large amount without the backing of expert advice. I propose therefore to have a survey made by experts as well as taking the best expert advice that we can get in this matter before we place a scheme before this House. I would therefore, assure the hon'ble member and not only the hon'ble member but the House and the public outside, who must be anxious to see that electricity is introduced in the province, that I shall try my level best to give it to them as early as possible and as efficiently as possible. (Hear, hear).

Now, Sir, with regard to the other matters, namely, the tramways, telephone and gas-works, I must confess that I have not thought about nationalising them, firstly, because they do not fall within the purview of my department. Telephone is under the control of the Government of India, and so far as the tramways are concerned, they are now, after passing through a very bad time, they are now earning some profit, but they have to go on progressing because they have to compete alongside the bus-transport; and if you nationalise the tramways then you have also to nationalise the bus-transport of this city. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Then why not do it?) Sir, all these require a great deal of consideration, and if my view is correct, I think that when the tramways of London were nationalised or municipalised it led to a loss of several hundred thousands of pounds per year, to the London County Council. (Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Don't attempt it then). This is a matter, Sir, of which I do not know which department of Government is in charge, but if it is to be considered at all, it cannot be considered by Government as a whole then before we can place some sort of a scheme before the House.

**Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** On a point of information, Sir. Ought not the Hon'ble the Labour Minister to know which department this matter belongs to, when the Cabinet boasts of being a "happy family"?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Suhrawardy, you have only 5 minutes more.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Is that so, Sir? I find that I have many things to reply to and how can I finish within five minutes? Sir, there is one matter in particular which I would like to deal with as I feel great sympathy with the complaint; and that is the difficulties of the Noakhali people. As a matter of fact, the hon'ble member who moved this cut motion has confessed to this House that the dereliction of duty lies not so much with the Government as with the District Board whose primary duty it was to establish the ferry service. Now, Sir, this service was established a little while ago, but as this service did not become a paying proposition by reason of the District Board not taking steps to stop the other ferries, it had to be discontinued. The Chairman of the District Board of Noakhali approached me—I do not know why he did so, because this subject does not fall within my department, for it really comes under the Department of Communications and Works, to establish a ferry service, but I tried my level best to assist him and the latest information that I have received is this, that they have been able to arrange with some other service and are on the point of concluding a contract. I wish him every success, but if he does not succeed, then we shall use whatever influence we possess to bring the contract to a successful conclusion.

Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi has moved that there are not sufficient Muhammadan officers in the department over which I have the honour to preside; and Mr. Nagendra Nath Sen also has referred to the paucity of Indian officers in the department.

Now, he has given an imposing list of officers but all of them are employed by and are under the administrative control of the Government of India. I have nothing to do with them at all. We pay only for two officers; but they are engaged by Government of India. All that we have got are two clerical posts merely in the Port Office here, both of whom are manned by Hindus. I have given instruction that the next vacancy should go to a Moslem. So far as the Chittagong Port Office is concerned, there are two permanent posts of which one is held by a Moslem, and one temporary post which is held by a Hindu. This is the position of affairs. We do not entertain a staff worth the name, and hence there is no validity in the charge that we only employ non-Indians.

Mr. Gupta has criticised us, and I value his criticism, because he has pointed out that I have not sufficient funds for my department. This is perfectly true. We are under-manned and I have not been able to fulfil the duties of this department as I have not got a sufficient number of factory inspectors who have to perform various duties under various acts. I am glad that he has raised this point, and I am glad that the labour members realise that my department is undermanned. And I hope, when I come up before this House with a fresh demand for more officers, they will not turn it down by telling me that we are only increasing the administrative departments and incurring unnecessary expenses. The persons who are working to-day in the Factory Department and in the Department of Labour are working day and night, and it is impossible for them to work any more. If you want the department to work more efficiently, you have got to give me an adequate staff, and I hope, for the sake of poor labourers this House will not turn down my proposals.

As regards the criticisms that have been made in regard to the recognition of Trade Unions, I may tell Mr. Aftab Ali that I have laid down certain principles of recognition. One of them is inspection by the Labour Commissioner of the books of account of the Trade Union that seeks recognition, because I am not satisfied that Government will accord recognition to any Trade Union which is being used by its leaders for the exploitation of the labourers. I suppose this is one of the reasons why no trade union has applied to Government for recognition. If they come forward, I will welcome them. But I may tell Mr. Aftab Ali that Government of its own accord is not going to accord recognition to those Trade Unions which are not coming up with

applications. And if they do come up, it will insist a very close inspection of their accounts, of their membership and fees and also of their method of doing work——

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** For strike breaking.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** Certainly, not for shouting revolutionary slogans against Government and against the employers. I will not have persons going about the country, shouting revolution, and claiming that they are by that means looking after the interests of the labourers.

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** But we have still our hold on labour which my friend has not.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** I can guarantee my good friend that he and his colleagues have been found out by the labourers and to-day he is at a discount. To-day the labourers have realised that he and his colleagues are no friends of the labourers——

**Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** I throw out a challenge to the Hon'ble Minister. I will resign my seat and in seeking re-election ask my friend also to contest it as my rival.

**The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY:** The time will come when we will see to that.

But I can assure Mr. Aftab Ali that the recognition of a Trade Union by no means means submission to Government or to the employers. I do want that strong Trade Unions should organise themselves, and I want them to face the employers on an equal footing, so that they may be able to get their rights and compel the employers to give them their rights. And in case they do not give them their rights, I can assure Mr. Aftab Ali and the labourers outside, as I would like to assure the employers that Government stand by the proposition which it laid down that it would give a fair deal to the labourers; and that it will use all powers of compulsion on either side to see that the labourers get their proper and legitimate dues.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy that a sum of Rs. 5,16,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "47—Miscellaneous Departments" was then put and agreed to.

The motion of Mr. Shibnath Banerjee that the demand under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund —Government Presses" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. P. Banerji that the demand under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker that a sum of Rs. 22,13,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "56—Stationary and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses" was then put and agreed to.

The motion of Mr. Syed Abdul Majid that the demand under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulana Muhammad Maniruzzaman Islamabadi that the demand under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Babu Nagendra Nath Sen that the demand under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Babu Nagendra Nath Sen that the demand under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" be reduced by Rs. 70,000 was then put and lost.

The original motion of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy that the demand of Rs. 4,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" was then put and agreed to.

**"9—Stamps."**

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,84,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps".

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I think I have just got 10 minutes before the prayer interval.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Can't we postpone the prayer till 6-30 p.m.?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No.

**Mr. ASIMUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,84,000 under the head "9—Stamps" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion on the failure in reducing the rate and value of the stamps and court-fees.

Stamp duty সম্বন্ধে অনেক কথা বলবার আছে, কিন্তু ৫ মিনিটের মধ্যে আমি কি বলবো বুঝি না। এখন কথা হচ্ছে, এই দেশে হিন্দু রাজত্বের শাসনকাল গেছে, মুসলমান বাদশাহের শাসনকাল গেছে, কিন্তু কিছার, আদান প্রদানের জন্য কোন stamp বা কোর্ট-ফির প্রথা ছিল কোন

রাজত্বেই ছিলো না। গভর্ণমেণ্ট ২।৩ বার এই কোর্ট-ফি যখন বাড়িয়েছেন তার বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিবাদ করা হয়েছে। এই জিনিষগুলি দরিদ্রের কাজেই লাগে বেশী, গরীবের ব্যবহারেই আসে বেশী। তাদের দেনা পাওনার বেলায়, খরিদ বিক্রয়ের ব্যাপারে এবং বিচার প্রার্থণায় stamp এর প্রয়োজন হয়। অত্যাচারিত, নির্য্যাতিত ব্যক্তিগণ, দরিদ্র কৃষক সমাজ এ গুলির প্রকৃত ভুক্তভোগী। যদি কোন পাওনাদার নালিশ করেন, কোর্ট-ফি নিজে থেকে দিয়ে, কিন্তু ডিক্রির পর তারই খরচ গিয়া পড়ে সেই গরীব খাতকের উপর। তা'ছাড়া দরিদ্র ব্যক্তিগণ অনেক সময় আদালতে যেতে পারে না এই কোর্ট-ফি এবং খরচের ভয়ে। কাজেই এই জিনিষের দ্বারা মানুষ যে কি ভাবে নির্য্যাতিত হচ্ছে সেটা আর বেশী বর্ণনা কোরতে হবে না। অনেকেই ন্যায্য বিচার লাভ করবার জন্যও কোর্টের আশ্রয়ে যেতে পারে না, অনেকে দেনা পাওনার কার্য্য সমাধা কোরতে পারে না এই অতিরিক্ত কোর্ট-ফি ও stamp fee এর মূল্যের দরুণ। এর উপরে আবার কোর্ট-ফির হার ক্রমশঃ বেড়ে চোলেছে। কি কারণে যে বৃদ্ধি হচ্ছে তার কোন যুক্তি নাই। ষ্ট্যাম্প থেকে গভর্ণমেণ্টের আয় হচ্ছে ৩ কোটী ৭ লক্ষ ৬৫ হাজার টাকা। আর ব্যয় হচ্ছে ৪ লক্ষ ৮৪ হাজার টাকা। যে Department এ গভর্ণমেণ্টের আয় এত অধিক সেই Department এ এত অতিরিক্ত মূল্যের ষ্ট্যাম্প ও কোর্ট-ফি দরিদ্রের ঘাড়ে চাপিয়ে দেবার অধিকার গভর্ণমেণ্টের আছে কি না সেটা আপনারা বিবেচনা করুন। কোর্ট-ফির মূল্য যদি অর্দ্ধেকও করা হয় তাহলেও গভর্ণমেণ্টের লাভ থাকবে। কাজেই আমি জিজ্ঞাসা কোরতে চাই, গভর্ণমেণ্ট কি দরিদ্র কৃষকের উপকার কোরতে চান, তাদের কি ন্যায্য বিচার দিতে চান? তাদের জমিজমা ক্রয়-বিক্রয়ের সুবিধা কোরে দিতে চান? তা যদি প্রকৃতই চান তবে গরীবের ঘাড়ে এত অতিরিক্ত ষ্ট্যাম্পের ব্যয় চাপিয়েছেন কেন? যদি বলা হয় যে, জমি বিক্রয়ের বেলায় ষ্ট্যাম্পের দাম তো খরিদ্দারেই দেয়, তা দেয় বটে কিন্তু শেষ পর্য্যন্ত ষ্ট্যাম্পের দাম গরীবের কাছ থেকেই কেটে নেয়, সুতরাং সব ক্ষেত্রেই ক্ষতিটা দরিদ্র ব্যক্তিরই ভোগ কোরতে হয়। সেই জন্য আমি বোলতে চাই গভর্ণমেণ্ট যদি বাস্তবিকই দরিদ্রদের, কৃষকদের উপকার কোরতে চান, তাহলে ষ্ট্যাম্প ও কোর্ট-ফির মূল্য অর্দ্ধেকের থেকেও কমান উচিত।

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Sir, I rise to oppose this motion. The practice of charging court-fees and stamp duties on documents is in vogue not merely in this Province, but in all the Indian provinces, and probably all over the civilized world. People are asked to pay court-fees not because of the luxury of litigation, but because they get justice, and Government have got to maintain the judiciary at a heavy expenditure. The revenues of this Department do not go only to cover the expenditure of that particular Department, but they are spent on other departments including the nation-building departments. Our rates of court-fees and stamp duties are by no means higher than those prevailing in other provinces of India.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** Sir, the question may now be put. We are hardly pressed for time.

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** Sir, I am on my legs.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** At any stage we can move, Sir.

**The Hon'ble Sir BIJOY PRASAD SINGH ROY:** I do not think, Sir, there is any justification in suggesting that the rate of court-fees and stamp duties should be reduced by half or by one-third as the hon'ble member suggested. It will mean a heavy loss of provincial revenues. Over 3 crores of rupees come from this source, and I do not think that the provincial exchequer can afford to sacrifice half of that revenue. The money that we derive from court-fees and stamps are, I dare say, well-spent in maintaining the high standard of our judiciary and in building up our nation-building departments.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** I propose to adjourn the House now: Immediately after we meet I will put this motion and the main motion, and all others will be guillotined. We meet punctually at half past six.

(The House was then adjourned for fifteen minutes.)

*After adjournment.*

The motion of Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed that the demand under the head "9—Stamps" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The original motion that a sum of Rs. 4,84,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps" was put and agreed to.

The time-limit having been reached the following demands for grants were disposed of.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. Sarker.

**"22—Interest and other obligations."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "22—Interest on Debt and other obligations".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Rule 118(*4*) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Rules and Standing Orders reads "on the last day of the days so allotted, at 6-30 p.m., the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of all the outstanding matters in connection with the demands for grants" but I find now that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has just moved the motion standing in his name. If that be allowed, Sir, will you permit the other members also to move their motions; otherwise, Sir, it is under the rules your duty to put all the motions before the House, and not ask the Hon'ble Ministers to put their motions.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** But I don't think I can move the motions regarding demand for grant myself. The Hon'ble A. K. Fazlul Huq.

**"36—Scientific Departments."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "36—Scientific Departments".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. Sarker.

**"57—Miscellaneous."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 18,22,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "57—Miscellaneous".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. Sarker.

**"Loans and Advances bearing Interest."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 22,16,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Loans and advances bearing interest".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. Sarker.

**"55—Superannuation allowances and pensions", "55A—Commutations of Pensions" and "83—Commuted value of pensions not charged to revenue."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 76,49,000 be granted for expenditure under the heads "55—Superannuation allowances and pensions", "55A—Commutations of pensions financed from ordinary revenue", and "83—Payment of commuted value of pensions".

The motion was then put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. Sarker.

**"Interest Free Advances."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. NALINI RANJAN SARKER:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 3,30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Interest —Free Advances".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

**"11—Registration."**

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 18,99,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "11—Registration".

The motion was put and agreed to.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Just two other matters which I want to finish before adjourning the House. The Deputy Speaker will please read the report of the Committee appointed last session.

**Committee of Procedure.**

**Mr. M. ASHRAFALI:** I beg to present the final report of the Committee which was appointed last session for drafting rules for regulating the rules of procedure and conducting the business of the House.

**The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN:** I beg to move that the Committee which was appointed, be allowed to continue as such, so that in case the House wants to refer any matter regarding these rules to that Committee before coming to a final decision, they may be able to do so.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** This is merely to keep the Committee in function so that any other matter that may arise till the rules are finished, might be discussed by that committee. Is there any objection?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The leave of the House is given.

### Committee of Privilege.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** There is just one matter to which I should like to refer. By virtue of a resolution regarding the Committee of Privilege, I nominated a Standing Committee. Under the Rules and Regulations which the House has accepted another Committee, it seems, ought to be set up. This Committee will consist of:—

Mr. Speaker as Chairman,
Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin,
Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose,
Sir George Campbell,
Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami,
Mr. Promatha Nath Banerjee,
Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal,
Mr. D. P. Khaitan,
Mr. Anukul Chandra Das,
Mr. Tamizuddin Khan,
Mr. M. Shamsuddin Ahmed,
Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi,
Mr. Fazlur Rahman (Dacca University),
Mr. Shah Abdur Rauf (Rangpur),
Maulvi Abdul Wahab Khan,
Mr. R. H. Ferguson,
Mr. M. Ashraf Ali, Deputy Speaker.

There is just one further matter involving important constitutional questions on which I should like to give my ruling. It relates to the question of presenting an address to His Excellency the Governor.

### Ruling of the Hon'ble Mr. Speaker regarding the presentation of address to the Governor.

Mr. Syed Abdul Majid and Dr. Sanaullah have given notice of a Resolution for presenting an address to the Governor under Rule 65 (section 127) of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Bengal Legislative Assembly. The purport of the resolution is to express the opinion of the House that it is incumbent upon Government to take immediate steps for the introduction of free and compulsory primary education in the province of Bengal including Calcutta and all other municipal areas and to express a further opinion of the House that

while all parts of the province both rural and urban including the city of Calcutta should be called upon to contribute to the cost of primary education and should be included within the scope of one single Act, the cultivators of the province should be excluded from the incidence of any such scheme of taxation on the ground that they have to bear an additional commodity tax on jute to the extent of 3·50 crores of rupees. I am called upon to consider as to whether this resolution for the purpose of presenting an address in terms of the above is permissible.

Rule 65 does not mention the nature and scope of an address nor is there any guidance in our Standing Rules about this. Under the Government of India Act an address to the Governor is contemplated in section 90 when a message is received by the Legislature from the Governor enacting in his discretion a Governor's Act or sending the draft of a Bill for that purpose. The Legislature in such circumstance may present an address within one month with reference to the Bill or the amendments suggested to be made therein. On the other hand under section 88 of the Act, in the circumstance of the Governor promulgating an Ordinance during the recess of the Legislature, it is not an address that could be presented to the Governor but a resolution of the Legislature may be passed disapproving of such an Ordinance. There is thus a definite distinction made between a resolution of the House in section 88(*2*)(*a*) and an address from the House under section 90(*2*). In the first, the Act of the Governor is an Act enacted on the advice of his Ministers and for all purposes it is an Act within ministerial responsibility whereas the Governor in the other case functions in his discretion. In view of these specific provisions and the distinction made between an address in the case of a Governor's Act and a Resolution in connection with a Governor's Ordinance and in the absence of any specific rule outlining the scope of an address to the Governor, I have to look to the general principles underlined in the Government of India Act and to the Parliamentary Practice and convention in such cases. The Government of India Act contemplates certain functions to be discharged by the Governor in his discretion, but subject to this, the entire executive administration of the province is to be exercised by Ministers responsible to the Legislature who exercise the executive authority on behalf of His Majesty and in the name of the Governor. The Government of the province, subject to the discretionary powers of the Governor and other safeguards, is in essence a system of ministerial responsibility and I do not find any constitutional justification for the Legislature to go behind such principle of ministerial responsibility and present an address to the Governor. The Legislature has full power to enact laws, to pass resolutions for expression of its opinion on any matter of general public interest and such an expression of opinion in the form of a resolution has, I take it, for its purpose an intimation to the executive of the wishes of the House. It appears that, in

England, an address can be presented to His Majesty and the subjects upon which such address is presented comprise matters of foreign or domestic policy, administration of justice, confidence on the Ministers of the Crown, expression of congratulations or condolence and various other matters connected with the Government and the welfare of the country, except that it is not presented in relation to any Bill pending in either Houses of Parliament. It should be remembered that in England such addresses are not always of a formal nature and are only permissible on the constitutional principle that His Majesty always acts on the advice of his Ministers and the King on all affairs of State does not function except on the advice of his Ministers. As a matter of fact the King in his speech from the throne always announces the policy and programme of Government and the King's speech is discussed as embodying the policy of the Executive. But even there such addresses are not presented unless it is on a matter of momentous importance and could not be done through any other procedure. Here in India the Governor has a dual function—one as the constitutional Governor, the other in the discharge of his functions in his own discretion. It would therefore not be desirable to introduce the procedure of presenting an address to the Governor in matters concerning the executive administration of a province which ordinarily lie within the scope of ministerial responsibility. The Government of India Act contemplates such presentation of address in section 308 in connection with any proposal for amendment of certain provisions of the Act or Orders in Council, but here also the matter is outside the scope of ministerial responsibility. I am therefore of opinion that the scheme of the constitution and its spirit are such that we should not introduce the procedure of presenting an address in matters in which the Governor functions as the constitutional Governor unless it be of a purely formal nature, such as, an expression of congratulations or condolence, etc., or a momentous matter of national concern. Matters which can be dealt with under ordinary rules of discussion in the Assembly and within the scope of ministerial responsibility should not come within the purview of an address, and generally speaking, controversial matters in which there might be scope of any difference of opinion should not be presented to the Governor, unless they come within the specific provisions of sections 308 and 90 of the Government of India Act. Otherwise our Standing Rules contemplating discussion of matters of public interest in a specific form will be nugatory, for any one might then, instead of giving notice of a resolution, might give notice of an address and every matter which could be brought in in the form of a resolution would be brought in in the form of an address.

I am therefore of opinion that in view of the constitutional distinction made between matters lying in the discretion of Governor and matters lying within the scope of ministerial responsibility and in view of the Government of India Act and our Standing Orders,

the procedure of address is intended for such matters as lie within the scope of the Governor's powers in his discretion or for which there is no ministerial responsibility and for which the Assembly might desire to express and place its views before the Governor who is otherwise inaccessible to the Assembly. No address would therefore lie against any action of the executive Government as the law provides for action to be taken by the Legislature in such matters.

**Mr. ABDUR RAHMÂN SIDDIQI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, our constitution is not on all fours with the other constitutions of the world, say, that of the United Kingdom. Ours is a truncated constitution, for certain aspects of the country's administration are outside its scope. Would the House be debarred from dealing with these questions under your ruling?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** As I have already said, an address is permissible as regards matters which lie outside the scope of Ministerial responsibility.

**Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** May I, Sir, just inquire about one thing—just to have further illumination on this point? Have we not got the right of presenting an address to His Excellency in reply to an address delivered by His Excellency the Governor in this House?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** That is quite a different matter. I believe that should be permissible ordinarily.

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Sir, before we disperse, I would ask your permission to detain the House for a few minutes to convey to you our sense of the appreciation of the manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this House during the budget discussions. This is not the first time, Sir, that your ability in managing the affairs of the House and conducting its debates ably and efficiently and on a very high plane has been put to the severest test, and I think I voice the feelings of all present when I say that on all occasions when you have had to deal with difficult situations and circumstances you have emerged out of those difficult situations and circumstances successfully——

**Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI:** Is it a vote of thanks or a valedictory address?

**The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ:** Whatever it is, it is there. On this occasion I feel that all sections of this House are in perfect agreement on the question of our being deeply grateful to you for the manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this House with uniform courtesy and strict observance of the rules and regulations. (Loud cheers.)

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Thank you. I shall now adjourn the House.

## Adjournment.

The Assembly was then adjourned till 6 p.m., on Tuesday, the 29th March, 1938, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

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